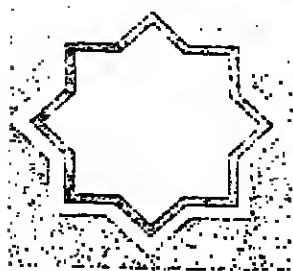


The Star



Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star

Une foire commerciale qui tourne à la foire d'empoigne

Voir page 12



AMMAN, 5-11 DECEMBER, 1996, VOLUME 7, NUMBER 31, 350 fils

اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Businessmen upbeat about prospects of trade ties with Iraq

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer
JORDANIAN BUSINESSMEN were busy renewing contacts with Iraq this week in the hope of landing lucrative deals following the implementation of the oil-for-food agreement between the UN and Baghdad. Until the Gulf crisis in August 1990, Iraq was Jordan's main trading partner.

Jordanian businessmen hope to satisfy part of Iraq's huge needs of food, medicine and spareparts, but Jordan's industrial sector, which has been suffering since the UN sanctions were imposed on Iraq, is also hoping that fresh orders from Baghdad will be coming soon. Under the UN deal, Iraq will be allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months.

But already hopes are being dampened by the fact that competition from Iran, Turkey

and Syria is stiff and that political relations between Jordan and Iraq are not at their best.

"Our businessmen and manufacturers must abide to the highest quality and competitive prices, this will be the biggest gauge for any exports to Iraq," Mr Tahir Al Tahir, the director of the Universal Iron and Steel Industrial Co., told *The Star*.

"In our talks with the Iraqi Minister of Commerce Mohammed Mahdi Saleh early this week we discussed the mechanism for increasing Jordanian exports to Iraq," Mr Tahir, an active member of Amman Chamber of Commerce added.

Discussions centered particularly on Iraq's needs of vegetable oils, pharmaceuticals and detergents. "We have the highest quality products in this field and are able to compete with some of the finest in this field," Al Tahir said.



King meets Sahaf at Kabarti's residence

This fact was affirmed by Dr Mohammed Al Firyani, Dar Al Dowra director. He said that Jordanian pharmaceuticals are among the best in the region and probably the world. The fact that it is already in the

Iraqi market testifies to its quality, he said. The private sector has been gearing up for the last couple of weeks waiting for the final signal from Iraq. But Jordanian businessmen hope that compet-

itive prices and quality will be the hallmark and not political tensions that marked bilateral relations.

Mr Tahir is optimistic that the coming period will prove that Jordan has a lot to offer. Aided by a commercial protocol with Iraq, he is convinced that exports to that country will increase.

While businessmen like Al Tahir are upbeat about trading prospects, many are calling for caution. They say the government must remove obstacles in the way of free trade and facilitate the free movement of commodities through free zones.

Free zones in Jordan have played a vital role in trading with Iraq since 1990. However, many businessmen have suffered as a result of high costs of land rental, cost of services and red tape. Al Tahir called on the govern-

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Iraqi oil flows for the first time in six years

Combined Agencies Reports

IRAQ ON Wednesday started filling its first oil sales contract with Turkey as Iraq oil began flowing in pipelines under the terms of the oil-for-food deal with the UN.

Iraq is expected to sell 75000 barrels of oil a day to a state-owned Turkish company, sources say the Iraqi government is negotiating contracts with other international companies.

The UN is allowing Iraq to export two-billion dollars worth of oil during the next six months. The money will be used to buy food and medicine for its needy population.

The official Iraqi news agency said Iraq's Ministry of Trade started signing food deals with foreign companies on Wednesday. The news agency quoted the Minister of Trade, Mohammed Saleh, as saying Iraqis would receive substantially more food rations when supplies arrive.

President Saddam Hussein reopened the oil pipeline that will carry Iraqi oil through Turkey back to the world market for the first time since 1990, although the oil failed to flow immediately because of a malfunction.

The agreement can be extended every six months if the Security Council decides that President Hussein's government is complying with UN conditions for the sales.

Iraq exports should be slightly less than 600,000 barrels a day, compared to more than 3 million barrels daily before Iraq's seizure of Kuwait



Crude oil prices dropped slightly in reaction to the news, and oil market watchers said the development was unlikely to result in any major price relief soon for consumers of gasoline and heating oil. The

additional Iraqi output is just under 1 percent of total world consumption of about 70 million barrels a day.

The total "isn't insignificant," said John Lichtblau of the Petroleum Research Institute, Washington.

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Saudis implicate Iran in Khobar bombing, call for retaliation

By R. Jeffrey Smith
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

THE SAUDI Arabian government has given the Clinton administration detailed data meant to support the Saudis' belief that the June bombing of a US military housing complex in the kingdom was carried out by Saudi Shiite extremists who were trained in Lebanon and acted with the support of the Iranian government.

Prince Nayef, the Saudi interior minister in charge of security, handed over the evidence to FBI Director Louis J. Freeh when Freeh visited the Saudi capital Riyadh late last month.

The data included confessions extracted from some of 40 Saudi Shiites detained and accused of involvement in the bombing, results of Saudi wiretaps and other electronic eavesdropping, and a detailed account of the movements of key alleged conspirators into and out of Saudi Arabia, Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, Damascus and Tehran, according to sources familiar with the matter.

Officials in the United States and Saudi Arabia described Freeh's meeting with Nayef as a turning point in the inquiry because it was the first formal presentation of much of what Saudi officials have learned during their five-month probe into the truck bombing. The blast killed 19 US Air Force service members



and wounded hundreds at the Khobar Towers military housing complex in Dhahran.

In a related development, some well-placed Saudi officials have suggested to the Clinton administration that the United States could lead other nations in taking some form of military and diplomatic action against Iran early next year if the United States agrees with the Saudis that Iran was linked to the bombing, the sources said.

The Saudi government as a whole has not yet taken a position that such action against Iran is warranted, because it is awaiting Washington's formal judgment about the case, the sources said.

But by raising this possibil-

ity now, while the top US foreign policy and defense positions are in a state of transition to new appointees, these Saudi officials have put the White House on notice that the issue of potential retaliation for the Khobar Towers bombing will be one of the first challenges of President Clinton's second term, they said.

US officials said Tuesday that FBI counterterrorism experts are now reviewing the latest Saudi evidence, which Freeh obtained from Nayef and other Saudi officials during the American's visit late last month. But the officials added that no final FBI or administration judgment about the credibility of the evidence is expected for weeks, if not

months. "It's still early," a senior US law enforcement official said. "It takes a while to sort through" evidence of the type presented to Freeh.

Saudis have told the United States that the data given to Freeh paint a picture of a conspiracy carried out by Saudi Shiite terrorists who received military-grade explosives, bomb components and training in Lebanon from members of Hezbollah, or the Party of God, a radical Islamic organization that long has been funded, trained and equipped by Iran.

Some of the Saudis and Hezbollah members traveled to and from Tehran before and after the explosion, and allegedly had extensive dealings with Iranian intelligence agents, the sources said.

The Saudi theory is that Iran's target was not so much the United States as the Saudi regime itself, on the assumption that the bombing would focus Saudi domestic attention on the kingdom's controversial ties with the West, encourage a withdrawal of US troops from the kingdom and possibly destabilize the Saudi leadership.

Saudi Arabia's pro-western monarchy, led by members of the Sunni branch of Islam, vies for influence in the Gulf and the Islamic world with Iran's anti-western, Shiite-led government.

However, proving that Iran was responsible for the bomb-

ing, and building a coalition of nations that supports concrete punishment, could be a formidable task for those in Riyadh who favor tough action.

One problem, the sources said, is that while there is little dispute within the upper reaches of the Saudi government about Iran's link to the blast, there remain different Saudi views about how aggressively the government should pursue the issue of military and economic retaliation by Washington and its allies.

"Some Saudis are not entirely happy with the consequences of this information" about Iran's alleged link to the blast, said a non-Saudi diplomatic source who spoke on condition that he not be identified.

He noted that the difference of views may reflect partly the long-standing splits in the royal family over the best way to deal with Iran and partly the intense maneuvering by members of the royal family in the race to succeed King Fahd, who is ailing.

Another problem for the Saudi officials who want retaliation is overcoming a suspicion among some government members that the kingdom is trying to foist responsibility for the blast on Iran, a convenient foreign target, so that Saudi Arabia does not have to acknowledge that the blast was a home-grown act of

Continued on page 2

Four unions threaten to break away from umbrella federation

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer

THE GENERAL Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) is facing a situation that threatens to rip its structure apart. Four unions want to break away from the GFTU. The unions accuse the federation of failing to protect the rights of workers.

Tension between union members and the federation is not new. It started when the GFTU leadership was accused of faking the document of the federation's general conference, back in October 1994. But the situation intensified during last month's strike by electricity workers. The federation opposed the strike action by the Electricity Workers Union and threatened to dissolve the union.

Labor activists accused the federation of abandoning the workers by siding with the Jordan Electric Power Co.

Relations between unions and the federation worsened, particularly when Mr Khalid Shraim, secretary general of the federation, submitted amendments to the GFTU's statute to the Ministry of Labor.

"It is only the executive committee of the federation or its general assembly that has the right to amend the by-laws," said Mr Abdallah Khalil, president of the Union of Banks Workers. The amend-

ments that were made gave the GFTU the power to interfere in the local affairs of unions. "This is another grave violation. Unions are internally independent but united under the umbrella of the federation," Khalil said.

The GFTU is an umbrella organization for 17 trade unions in Jordan. It has about 200,000 members, and forms one-fourth of the 800,000-strong labor force in the country.

The labor unions of the Banks, Health Services, the General Services and Electricity are seriously planning to call their general assembly to convene to discuss the disengagement plan. The presidents of the four unions sent a memo to the Minister of Labor Dr Abdel Hafiz Al Shakhaneh, protesting amendments made by the federation's leadership. They said they would go to court if the amendments were adopted by the Ministry of Labor.

If they pull out of the federation, then this will be the first break-away since the federation was founded in 1954. "We are against splits and we tried to safeguard the unity of the labor movement within the federation. But we are facing grave violations practiced by the GFTU leadership," said Ma Bassam Al Orani, president of the Union of General Services Workers. "The leadership does not protect workers, many of its decisions harm them." She added that "if the federation does not mend its ways, we will be forced to pull out of the federation."

"We want a strong federation to defend our rights not a federation that works against us, for the sake of individual benefits," said Mr Khalil. However, the GFTU leadership said that it is working for the sake of workers. It implied that it had no prior knowledge of the proposed splits. "Nobody informed us about any resignations," said Mr Mazen Al Ma'aita, deputy secretary general of the GFTU.

He claimed that "three union leaders confirmed that they gave no statement to the press about disengagement plans." He added that "The Labor Law does not give them such a right."

Mr Khalil rejected Ma'aita's claim. "The Labor Law and the by-laws of the federation state that membership is voluntary, based on that, we have the full right to resign if each union's general assembly agrees to that."

A meeting was held last week between union representatives and GFTU's leadership under the auspices of Mr Shakhaneh, but no agreement was reached. The Union of Health Workers, which joined the four unions in their plans to break from the federation, later withdrew under pressure.



Ma'aita

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Pablo Neruda Making a poet's life public

By Sebastian Rotella
LA-Washington Post News Service

ISLA NEGRA, Chile.—The poet and the carpenter worked together for 25 years.

The poet was Pablo Neruda, the Nobel Prize winner who championed working people and considered himself just another craftsman. The carpenter was Rafael Plaza, a sturdy man with a leathery face who built Neruda's beach house.

Their work-in-progress was a house full of eclectic treasures with a view of the surf dancing on rocks. At night, Plaza would go to Neruda's study, and the poet would sketch the latest project, such as a wooden ship's hatch that Neruda found on the beach and Plaza made into a desk.

"He liked things like that," Plaza recalls. "In the morning he would sit nearby. He wrote, and I did my work."

Neruda died 23 years ago. His house and his memory were neglected during a 17-year dictatorship. But today the house is a museum—a national treasure in which there has been a surge of interest because of the acclaimed movie

"Il Postino" (The Postman), which features a Neruda character. The ensuing Neruda boom has benefited well-organized effort here to celebrate the poet's legacy.

And in a country where poetry was once inseparable from political conflict, Chileans—along with the rest of the world—have rediscovered Neruda as part of their democratic healing process.

"The clamorous success of the movie has brought attention to Neruda's works," says Juan Agustín Figueroa, director of the Pablo Neruda Foundation. "The results have been extraordinary."

More than 130,000 visitors from Latin America, Europe, the United States and elsewhere trooped through the museum in the fishing village of Isla Negra last year.

Here and in two other Neruda houses, the Neruda foundation operates variable cultural centers with a particularly Chilean combination of taste and entrepreneurial verve. The museums sponsor poetry prizes and host concerts, exhibits and literary workshops; they sell books and tapes of Neruda's poetry along with posters, pens, postcards and artwork.

And just as the poet had requested, Chilean copper miners and others of modest means enter free or at reduced

rates. The Isla Negra home was a landmark for readers of Neruda even before the movie, which, although based on a Chilean novel, transplants Neruda's house to an Italian island. Neruda wrote much of his poetry in his rambling stone-and-wood house.

He was known as a romantic, hospitable, playful man of extremes, and the house has his prodigious personality. It bursts with paintings, sculptures, books, decorations and curiosities acquired during his travels, such as giant figurines from ships' crews.

In his poetry and his will, Neruda said he wanted to open the house to the public after his death. He and his third wife, Maude, set up a foundation to administer his writings and his houses—the other two are in the capital, Santiago, and the coastal city of Valparaiso.

The military coup shortly before Neruda's death in late 1973 shattered his plans to

open his property to the public. Because Neruda was an ally of the ousted socialist president, Salvador Allende, he was buried hurriedly in a pauper's grave in Santiago. Soldiers menaced his mourners and looted his house in Santiago.

"They destroyed it," says Plaza, grimacing at the memory. Although the house at Isla Negra was not vandalized, it was closed during most of the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet. The return of democracy in 1990 enabled Figueroa, who was Neruda's family lawyer and a Cabinet minister in the new government, to proceed with his long-delayed task.

At the poet's behest, the foundation donated Neruda's books and papers to universities. The houses were restored to the way they looked when Neruda was alive.

And in a ceremony full of



Electricity workers accuse GFTU of abandoning them

هكذا من الأصل

Greater awareness needed to combat growth of AIDS, experts argue

By Manal Omar
Special to The Star

On December 1, the world community launched the 1996 campaign for AIDS Awareness. The annual campaign is the eighth since it was started in 1988. Its objective is to provide accurate information about the fatal four-letter disease known simply as AIDS, or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. During the first emergence of AIDS, little information and many myths developed about it. As a result, AIDS became labeled as the immoral disease, the homosexual's cancer, or God's plague. A false security was created, and new myths and misleading information dominated people's knowledge of AIDS.

However, the rise of cases in the world during the mid-'80s proved that AIDS is a disease that chooses its victims indiscriminately. In order to wage a successful and

productive war against this fatal disease one must understand the origins and symptoms of AIDS.

AIDS is a disease caused by a virus called HIV—human immunodeficiency virus. It weakens the body's natural ability to fight various lethal infections and cancers. People with AIDS are prone to infections that would ordinarily not be a threat to healthy people. AIDS also affects the central nervous system and can cause gradual mental deterioration and progressive paralysis.

HIV is transmitted through the body fluids—usually blood or semen—of an infected person. Almost all known cases were the result of intimate sexual contact, injections with hypodermic needles, transfusions of contaminated blood or blood products, or passage from mother to child.

Although the disease can be transmitted from man to woman, or woman to

man, or partners of the same sex, a woman is more likely to acquire HIV from a male partner than a male from a female partner. As a result, AIDS is a leading disease among women and children. In 1981, only 3.2 percent of reported AIDS cases occurred in women. Today, women and adolescents are the two fastest-growing populations of persons with AIDS. In 1995 in the United States alone, more than 20,000 women were diagnosed with AIDS, and 140,000 American women were known to be HIV-infected. Epidemiologists predict that by the year 2000 more women than men will have AIDS in the US, as is already the case worldwide.

There is no doubt of the huge impact AIDS has had on the international community. According to statistics by the World Health Organization (WHO), by 1992 between nine and 11 million adults and about one million children had become HIV positive. Two-thirds of these victims lived in developing countries. WHO estimates that by the year 2000, 30 to 40 million will be infected. By then, 10 million HIV carriers will have developed into full-blown AIDS, and 90 percent of the cases will be in developing countries.

The Middle Eastern region has not escaped. By 1988 countries of the region began to participate in International AIDS Awareness Day. Each year the momentum from those countries increases as they target the disease. In its 41st session, the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Committee called on its regional director to "take the necessary steps to maintain the regional role in prevention and control of AIDS, including information exchange." According to the 1995 WHO report, AIDS cases in the region are now representing a significant concern.

It would be naive to believe that AIDS has not penetrated into the Jordanian community as well. Over the past few years, Jordan has become an active participant in International AIDS Awareness Day. From specialists on different television programs to distributing fliers, the

Ministry of Health has been committed to informing Jordanians about the threat of the disease.

"Jordan as a country is not protected from AIDS. The first cases of AIDS was discovered in 1986. Since we first recognized the problem in Jordan we have begun to emphasize efficient and effective methods to deal with the disease," explained Dr. Saad Kharabsheh, a medical epidemiologist and the Director of Disease Prevention and Control in the Ministry of Health. "Even if there is only one single case, then it is a problem for Jordan," Dr. Kharabsheh told The Star.

According to the Health Ministry, today there are 146 AIDS cases, 90 of which are Jordanians. In 1986 a National AIDS Body was created to combat the problem. "Our strategy falls under two lines. First, we address the community through emphasis on health education and provide accurate knowledge. In addition, we specifically concentrate on those who are considered a high risk group. We educate them on how to protect themselves, and the community," explained Dr. Kharabsheh.

According to Jordanian immigration laws, if a tourist or worker has AIDS he is either denied entrance or deported. Many hospitals are also taking precautions. In the Princess Rahma Hospital, AIDS testing and education is not something new. In addition, they have started blood testing before marriage to decrease the accidental transmission of the HIV virus. Dr. Ayman Al Barbarawy at the hospital said AIDS in Jordan is a new disease that is relatively hard to monitor. "There is nothing called statistics for the number of cases in Jordan. Many patients who have the disease may be too shy to admit it," Dr. Barbarawy told The Star.

Indeed, Dr. Kharabsheh said the cumulative number may not accurately reflect the total number of AIDS cases in Jordan.

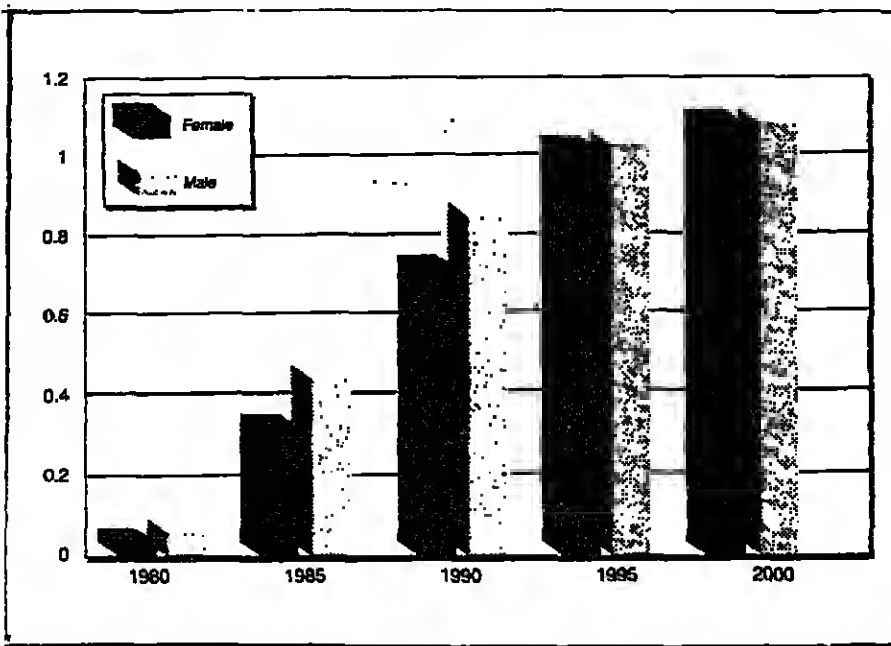
"The future is not clear, not only for Jordan but on a global scale as well. We

hope that something dramatic will happen, such as the development of a new vaccine or effective treatment. Until then we emphasize awareness," stated Dr. Kharabsheh.

Perhaps the most crucial element that needs to be emphasized is that there are means of protection against AIDS. "The Ministry of Health and other sectors in Jordan are doing their best in the past decade to implement prevention," emphasized Dr. Kharabsheh. Presently, there is no vaccine available to prevent the spread of AIDS. According to Karen Carlson from the Harvard Medical School, the transmission of the AIDS virus can be substantially reduced by avoiding risk factors such as casual sex, avoiding substance abuse, and never sharing needles. In addition, women who think they may have HIV should consult a physician, and those who are thinking about having a baby should receive pre-conception counseling. When receiving blood transfusions, check with the blood bank that proper screening was conducted.

The most crucial step in the war against AIDS is awareness. Established in August 1990 under the World Health Organization, the AIDS Information Exchange Center's (AIEC) main objective is AIDS awareness. By erasing the myths and false information, the international community can identify ways to attack this 20th century plague. In his first speech delivered as executive director of UNAIDS in Cape Town South Africa, Dr. Peter Beut stated that he was confident that AIDS could be overcome, just as apartheid was eventually defeated. The Jordanian community as a whole needs to be aware of the disease which is plaguing the globe.

As General Director of WHO Dr. Hiroshima Nakajima explained, the fight to overcome AIDS will never succeed unless everyone shares responsibility to combat the epidemic. Through this union, the international community will learn to stand as one to overcome obstacle after obstacle. ■



Arab pressure grows to end sanctions against Iraq

Continued from page 1

military.

These developments have occurred against a backdrop of growing anger among ordinary Arabs over the trade sanctions and the role of the United States in prolonging them. The view is that the sanctions unfairly punish the Iraqi people for the sins of their leader while doing nothing to weaken Saddam's grip on power.

For several years, Egypt and UAE in particular have been urging Saddam to comply with UN weapons inspections while holding out the carrot of reconciliation. The UAE president, Zayed Sultan Nahayan, recently called for resumption of full relations even before certification of Iraqi's compliance.

UAE is expected to raise the normalization issue at this month's annual summit meeting of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council. But Zayed's proposal already has encountered stiff resistance from the Kuwaiti prime minister, Crown Prince Saad Abdulah Sabah. He told the Kuwaiti parliament after meeting with Zayed last Tuesday that "reconciliation does not apply to a country like Iraq."

Saudi Arabia has voiced similar objections. "We will never feel secure so long as Saddam Hussein rules Iraq," a Saudi official said. "To ease the pressure on Saddam because of the suffering of his people would be the same as negotiating with a terrorist holding hostages—it never works." ■

Draft budget calls for cut in deficit, self sufficiency

Continued from page 1

ful steps taken by the national economy to achieve self-reliance and reform the economic and financial sectors. Such a goal, he added, can not be fulfilled unless there is a concrete and sound cooperation between the legislative and executive branches of government together with the support of friendly countries and global institutions.

Global figures indicate that economy is leading positive records over 1996 as investments in the private sector led to a growth in productivity. They also reduced our debts enabling the country to maintain financial and monetary stability, the minister added.

With the approval of the series of economic and financial measures to be submitted soon to the Lower House, Awadh expects the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to

increase by 6.5 percent by next year. "The rise in prices will be within the limit of 4 percent while the increase in our exports will exceed 8.8 percent," he explained.

The ratio of debts to the GDP has fallen from 190 percent in 1990 to only 90 percent in 1996. This was achieved by adopting a strategy to reschedule debts and get loans at facilitated conditions.

The Central Bank of Jordan has managed to maintain the value of the dinar against the US dollar. This policy has strengthened assets. In addition, the paid-up capitals of companies registered at the Ministry of Trade and Industry recorded a noticeable increase as encouraged by incentives provided by the law to promote investments. Awadh concluded. ■

Opponents promise to quash exhibition

Continued from page 1

ement to step in. Using the press to air their views, they are sending messages to the Royal Court, the Prime Ministry and other state institutions.

They agreed to draw up a code of honor to be signed by all Jordanian sectors to prevent all forms of normalization with Israel. A national product fair will be planned to coincide with the Israeli one.

Participants promised an extensive protest campaign. Those who attended are to hold a series of sit-ins in front of the fair, and ones in front of the Trade Ministry and Parliament.

They also agreed to blacklist those behind the planned fair, and those who would accept invitations. If they fail to stop the fair

from being held, then they would be willing to build a 'human dam' or a 'car dam' in front of the expo to prevent entry.

Another meeting will convene today, Thursday, in the Chamber of Industry. The meeting will be attended by the different sectors in the country, particularly from political parties and those in the business.

In his weekly meeting with the press, Minister of Information, Dr. Marwan Muasher, said "the fair is the concern of the private sector, and the peace treaty allows for such exhibitions." But he added that the issue is not merely the holding of such a fair, it is beyond that, it is about the negative atmosphere surrounding the peace process.

However, the minister confirmed that there is no govern-

ment pressure practiced on the organizers to cancel the idea. But an official source told The Star official that pressure is implicit since the holding of such a fair has been put off till 6 January of next year.

The source added the popular outrage against the fair is presently used to force Israel to implement its trade agreements with Jordan, and end the imposition of obstacles on the movement of Jordanian exports to the Palestinian territories.

The organizers of the fair have been preparing for the fair since June, the three-day fair was planned to take place on 15 December. Al Nasser said about 300 Israeli businessmen are expected to attend the fair, and that over 80 Israeli companies had confirmed their participation. ■

JORDAN TODAY
TOURISM - CULTURE - ENTERTAINMENT
DECEMBER 1996

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

Scouts of honour

INSIDE Jordan Today's comprehensive guide including What's On this Christmas at Hotels, Restaurants.

December issue is now on selected newsstands for more information
Call 645-380

Amman witnesses an activity hype after oil for food deal

Continued from page 1

nies are keen to enter the Iraqi market and feel that they are able to compete with major international concerns. The Iraqi Minister of Commerce assured that the Aqaba port will be the prime beneficiary for Iraqi imports.

Jordan imports oil and gas from Iraq to the tune of \$500 million in exchange for Jordanian products and other foodstuff items.

Though the size of Jordan's trade with Iraq has been low this year at \$220 million, observers believe that this volume will go up after the signing of a trade protocol with Iraq next year. ■

THE BEAUJOLAIS CELEBRATION
AT FORTE GRAND AMMAN

Every year on the 3rd Thursday of the month of November, France celebrates the arrival of Beaujolais Nouveau, an old French tradition originating from a place where gastronomy is a real art. The Andalusia Restaurant at Forte Grand Amman takes pride in offering you a selection of specialties from the Beaujolais region. A superb à la carte menu presented to you, and entertainment by Accordionist Mathieu Pallas flows in directly from Paris. Starting November 28th through December 5th '96 from 7pm onwards. For reservations call 665111 ext 6645.

FORTE GRAND AMMAN
PEUGEOT KLM

Sony unveils digital power production in Jordan

AMMAN—At a press conference held last Monday at The Forte Grand Hotel, Sony Broadcast and Professional—Middle East and their distributor in Jordan, Mr. Zaki A. Ghul, unveiled Digital Power Production, a revolutionary and unique all-digital, totally integrated production system for the professional market. Full presentation and hands-on demonstrations were given.

Although the range was previewed earlier this year in Europe, the actual Middle East launch coincides with the launch world-wide. This reflects Sony's stated commitment and confidence in the region as well as the rapid growth of the professional video production sector. In fact, more than 1000 professionals will attend Digital Power Production roadshows across the Middle East over the next few months.

The consumer DV format enables a range of products to be developed to cover the needs of a wide range of users. The complete system is entirely digital from acquisition through to presentation. It maintains the same compression scheme throughout. Tape and disk work seamlessly together with bi-directional transfer of data between them at four times real time via the QSDI serial digital interface. This dramatically increases production flexibility and creativity.

The new system is designed for 'real world' applications so video producers can integrate broadcast, professional and consumer equipment as needed. Key elements of Digital Power



Production are the DVCAM DSR Series recorders, including the DSR-IP dockable GTR: two non-linear editing systems, ES-7 and ES-3 EditStation, the DSR-130P and DSR-200P digital camcorder and the DXC-D30P dockable camera. Sony has also introduced the CLIPLink feature. This is a complete revolution for the industry because it permits editing while shooting by creating up to 198 video clips and storing them for easy access and uploading to the EditStations.

Mr. Robert Sherman, senior manager at Sony Broadcast and Professional—Middle East, said Sony is offering a unique vision to the production professional.

"This is not about a format introduction. Rather we are launching a totally integrated, fully digital video production system which gives the market

what it needs—high performance, easy-to-use, cost-effective systems. This means customers have new and exciting ways of making their programs."

"Another vital attribute for today's market is the new range's compatibility with existing analogue, digital consumer and digital broadcast equipment which means total choice for every customer. Everyone can build an all-digital production suite at their own pace."

The company is a leading supplier of video and audio systems and products to Broadcasters. Its products are in use at local and regional television stations. This complete line-up of digital equipment—a complete 'system solution'—represents a quantum leap forward in corporate video production. ■

Rights Group accuses Palestinian Authority of abuses

Continued from page 1

night. "Despite repeated declarations by President Arafat that he will end the torture and human-rights abuses, the fact is the situation is continuing to worsen," said Mark Sagheb, a spokesman for Amnesty International in London.

Complaints of abuse were routinely ignored and wrongdoers were rarely punished, the report concluded, leaving Palestinians increasingly afraid to speak out. Reprisals against whistle-blowers were common.

Palestinian officials Monday acknowledged abuses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip areas under their control, but said that the Palestinian National Authority was trying to curb them.

"We know there are some violations of human rights in our country," said Marwan Kanafani, a top aide to Arafat and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council. "We are against that and we have to find solutions to stop that. ... The only positive thing I could say now is that this is not the policy of the government."

The report said that about 50 civilians have been killed and 100 wounded since 1994 by the Palestinian police. At least nine Palestinians have died either as a result of torture or in situations where torture was a contributing factor. According to Palestinians interviewed by Amnesty International, interrogation techniques included burning detainees with cigarettes, beating them on the testicles with electrical cables, depriving them of sleep, suspending them from hooks on the ceiling, and forcing them to sit or stand for as long as 20 days while handcuffed to a chair.

Amnesty International concluded that the virtual impunity afforded to those who violated human rights indicated that the abuses were "condoned at the highest level."

International reaction has been muted, the report said, because the international community, in its desire to see peace reached between Israelis and Palestinians, had "subordinated human-rights concerns to the pursuit of peace." In fact, it said, detentions of Islamic militants multiplied earlier this year after a series of bus bombings in Israel, when Arafat came under pressure from Israel and the United States to clamp down on those responsible.

Some of the interrogation techniques used against Palestinian detainees—especially the use of sleep deprivation and "position abuse," in which the detainee is held in an uncomfortable position for long periods—show "striking similarities" with Israeli practices recorded for many years against Palestinian political detainees, the report said. ■

CLASSIFIEDS

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JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

What, another austere one for next year?



Jahid Rifai/Al-Dustour

Trial of killer starts

The court hearings of Mazen Al Masri, the one who poisoned to death his two children using cyanide, has started at the Greater Criminal Court earlier this week. Despite confessing to the crime during interrogations, Al Masri rejected the accusations against him. He said "I am not the accused, not guilty and what I said was a figment of my imagination that I will show during my defense in court." The lawyer of the accused told the court that he wanted Al Masri to undergo medical treatment to establish his proper psychological state. He said that experts from the University of Jordan earlier questioned the defendant's psychological status, but the prosecution rejected this saying the court will only deal with the facts in front of them. In the end, the judges, headed by Dr. Abed Al Rahman Tawfiq agreed with the prosecution and are now submitting evidence. Dr. Tawfiq said there are no indications to prove that the accused is mentally disturbed. The case of Al Masri has rocked the nation. It was only after two weeks of police work that the accused was convicted. Al Masri gave his two children two deadly cyanide tablets, pretending they were vitamin pills just before school.

Biggest drugs case uncovered by police

One of the biggest cases of drug smuggling was uncovered earlier this week. Over 80 kilograms of Hashish and 14,000 captagon stimulant tablets were uncovered by the anti-drugs squad in the eastern part of the country according to the police. The drugs were found in a well equipped settlement of tents in the desert according to the head of the squad, Col. Nazih Sharaideh. Under the guise of nomadic bedouins, these smugglers used their position to establish extensive routes with the neighboring countries. Part of an extensive plan, and working with the Badia border guards, the anti-drug squad was able to surround the tents which had a number of men and women at the time with drugs in their possession. The colonel said that they also found 11 rifles and machine guns and four pistols.

Tourism projects to be axed

The Ministry of Tourism is to axe seven of its projects in its Environment and Heritage Resources Department starting from the middle of this month. These projects are in the Amman Citadel, Petra, Irbid, Madaba, Um Qais and Wadi Rum. What is also worrying is that at least 600 workers who work on these projects will be laid off. These are daily workers who look after about 400 families, although they have a limited monthly income of JD 120. The Ministry decided to axe the projects back in September, but the workers protested and the decision was put off till this month. However, Ministry officials say that these projects will really have to be cut because of the lack of central government funding. The Minister of Tourism Dr. Saleh Irsheidat says that this type of work is temporary by nature and with the onset of the winter season, outside work is affected by the weather. But he also pointed out that there is no specific funding for these types of projects. He asked the Ministry of Finance to increase funding for these projects, but the latter would only agree to provide only 40 percent of what is needed.



Irsheidat

Unions to break away from GFTU

Five trade unions are seriously thinking about breaking away from the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU). They are the Bankers' Association, the Spinning and Weaving Union, Health Union, the General Services Union and the Electricity Workers Union. If they decide to go ahead with it, then this will be the first breakaway since the Federation was founded in 1954. The five unions are angry with the way the GFTU handled the recent electricity workers strike. They have already met the Minister of Labor, Dr. Abdel Hafiz Al Shakhaneh, but it seems that the unions are dead set upon their decision.

Parties for the people

After taking a backseat for quite sometime, political parties could be back in the limelight. This is not an altogether a bad idea since political parties should be the linchpin of a modern democratic society. It is with this view in mind that they will be holding a three-day conference on 16 December. For the first time political parties from all over the Arab World will assemble in Amman to create a general secretariat. The conference is thought to be the brainchild of Mr. Suleiman Arar, the secretary general of the Al Mustaqbal Party. The idea is to establish greater rapport with political parties in the Arab world over issues of common interest. The conference agenda will be full and four broad themes are going to be tackled. These include a reading of the general Arab situation which will be presented by Mr. Arar, an "Arab development project," the roles of Arab parties in building popular solidarity and democracy and pluralism in the Arab world.

Crime rate down for November

We have another piece of good news. The crime rate has gone down in November according to police statistics just released. Crimes went down by 13.5 percent over last October. A total of 1017 crimes were reported last month. About 28 percent of these related to burglary, 23 percent to minor crimes and 13 percent drunken disorderly.

Eating in schools!

It's all doom and gloom this week I am afraid. One little 6-year-old boy died instantly after eating a school sandwich in Irbid. His two brothers (both seven and nine years of age) are in a critical condition after eating school sandwiches.

King Hussein expresses concern for peace process

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein said that he was impatient about the peace process. Speaking during an interview with David Frost on the British Broadcasting Corporation, he said "I think I am becoming a little impatient and a little concerned. Without visible progress in implementing agreements reached earlier between the Israeli government and the Palestinians in particular, we are at the mercy of events." He added that "anything could happen that could throw us completely off the track we have chosen."

He said that delays in Israeli redeployment to Hebron were the most urgent. Hebron should have been sorted out, "but let's hope that it will open the way for further negotiations in terms of the final status negotiations that were agreed upon in the past so that we can have a happy conclusion, hopefully a happy one."

He said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is amiable but said his actions had not been very encouraging.

"I am in a dilemma. I don't know how one can wait and risk something terrible happening," He added, "Signs are not encouraging about the final

status negotiations on Jerusalem. What I have noticed is that he [Netanyahu] has almost stuck to what he has said in the past. May be he would like to appear to have done so. But I believe what is needed is flexibility and vision, and an ability to arrive at something that is to be protected by all peoples in our region once and for all," the King added.

Prime Minister Abdel Karim Al Kabarti accused Mr. Netanyahu of double talk. Speaking to the Israeli *Maariv* newspaper he said "We are more than puzzled, we are very much frustrated that what you hear is something and what you see on the ground is something else."

Mr. Kabarti said Jordan urged Arab states to give Netanyahu a chance after his election as Prime Minister in May. "We wanted very much to trust Netanyahu. We gave Netanyahu every single chance and we gave him the benefit of the doubt, and we went to the Arab summit meeting and we worked towards convincing everybody that this newly elected prime minister needs time to get his act together."

Mr. Kabarti said that before the Israeli elections, Netanyahu committed himself to the



peace process. "So we thought that he had it all worked out in his mind and he has his strategy. Now the question is 'does Bibi Netanyahu have a strategy or not?' I don't know," the premier added.

He said that Jordan has seen "too much inconsistency coming out of Israel. No one can make up their mind on what Israel wants or is hoping for."

Government gets ready to hunt down parties with 'foreign links'

For the past two years the government has been warning political parties against maintaining dubious "foreign links". Political parties responded that the government is yet to provide a proof and that it was using these allegations to harass opposition parties.

By Raed Al Abed

Star Staff Writer

SOME JORDANIAN political parties are still coming under fire for their alleged dependency on external funding. Political observers are talking about firm steps being taken by the government to bring legal suits against a number of political parties, with the final aim of dissolving them. Among these parties are the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath (JASBP), the Progressive Arab Ba'ath (PABP), and the Popular Democratic Unity (PDUP) parties.

The People's Democratic Party (Hashd) is already facing a legal suit over similar allegations. All of these parties are licensed and form the core of the 11-party opposition bloc led by the Islamic Action Front.

For the past two years the government has been warning political parties against maintaining dubious "foreign links". Political parties responded that the government is yet to provide a proof and that it was using these allegations to harass opposition parties.

Sources told *The Star* that the Ministry of Interior is working diligently to uncover evidence to implicate certain parties. The same sources said that the Ministry will soon file charges against them.

Government efforts have intensified since His Majesty King Hussein criticized political parties which, he said, have organizational and financial links with outside forces.

In his Speech from the Throne, opening the ordinary session of Parliament last month, the King said, "The attempt by some who are misguided and blinded enough to adopt examples from those who are way behind us in achievement and development is truly pitiful. These are futile efforts in search of abstract roles or cheap external funding."

Observers believe such

Royal remarks are being taken by the government as a "green light" to start a campaign against those parties who have financial and organizational relations with foreign parties and may be receiving instructions from abroad. Also in a previous letter, the King asked the Prime Minister to take measures to deal with this issue.

"Accepting funds from 'foreign parties' is a serious accusation. Article 24 of the Political Parties Law states that anyone who is known to receive external funding faces a fine of JD 2000, a prison sentence of up to two years or both penalties."

Article 19 of the same law categorically states that parties should be financially independent and that financing received should be from inside the country.

The law also emphasized that political parties must be organizationally and politically independent and must not have outside links.

But legal experts are on opposite sides concerning the identification of parties who are linked to outside forces. "Licensing parties is based on their political programs and internal by-laws and as long as their agendas are Jordanian in concept they remain legal," said Dr. Raed Al Joudi, a law expert and a researcher in Jordanian political affairs. "Coordination with non-Jordanian parties is not a link, as long as the internal structure of the party is independent, and as long as the party is already legalized by the government."

Lawyer Mohamed Al Sobalhi stands on the opposite side of the debate. Through his numerous articles in the daily and weekly press, he believes that there are parties that receive instructions from outside forces, and therefore are violating the Political Parties Law. Al Sobalhi points the finger to the leftist parties.

The four parties who are on the spot are known as the his-

torical opposition parties in the country. At one stage of their history they formed the bulk of the anti-regime movement. They were illegal and they worked underground until 1989.

The government is now talking about intelligence reports and documents that charges some high ranking members in these parties of attending organizational meetings of parties in other countries, and of receiving funds from outside organizations.

JASBP, which was founded in the early 1940s and is strongly rooted in the south of the country, adopts a pan-Arab program which is aligned with that of the ruling Ba'ath party in Iraq. During the bread riots that took place in the south of the country last August, the government accused the Iraqi Ba'ath party and its Jordanian counterpart of being behind the events. A number of activists affiliated with the party were arrested.

"The Iraqi Ba'ath and our party have the same pan-Arabist principles. We are also part of the pan-Arab movement in the Arab world," said lawyer Ahmad Al Najdawi, spokesman of the JASBP. "But each party has its independent internal platform."

"We strongly reject any outside finance. If they point fingers to Iraq, everybody knows that Iraq needs finance, not vice versa," he added.

Syria's ruling Ba'ath party, its program and ideas, find sympathy with the PABP—the latter is known for organizing scholarships to high school graduates in Jordan. According to some intelligence reports, those students must be members of the Ba'ath party as a condition to be accepted in Syrian universities.

Both Hashd and the PDUP are being accused for their links to two Marxist Palestinian factions: the Damascus-based DFLP and PFLP. Both oppose the Palestinian peace

agreements with Israel.

Hashd's case is already in court. Based on a report from the General Intelligence Department (GID) last year, the then Minister of Interior requested the Prosecutor General to take legal action against Hashd.

The GID based its report on statements by a splinter group of Hashd, which later joined other parties. The group accused the leadership of Hashd of being both financially and organizationally dependent on the Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

In a surprise step, three former high ranking Hashd officials testified against their party leadership last month. The three testimonies were trying to prove that Hashd is receiving finance and directives from the DFLP.

"We are comfortable towards the process of the trial," said Mr. Salim Al Nahas the general secretary of Hashd. "There is no evidence against us, what was said in the court was accusations by separatists who delivered their personal antipathy against the party." Al Nahas confirmed that Hashd is an independent party, and that those who have something else to say are welcome to prove it.

Lower House deputy Basam Haddadin left Hashd two years ago in protest of what he said was the connection of Hashd to the DFLP both organizationally and financially. Haddadin was also fighting for the "Jordanianization" of Hashd.

Observers believe that the issue might involve several other parties, if the government does not find a proper definition to what "links to outside parties" really means.

One political observer mused that if the term "link" is left loose and undefined, the government could end up accusing the Jordanian Communist Party of links to Saudi Arabia because the party took a stand against Iraq in the post Gulf War.

People & Politics

Wafsi Al Tal's legacy lingers

Wafsi Tal's legacy lingers

Twenty-five years after the assassination of Wafsi Al Tal, his legacy as a statesman lingers. For generations of Jordanians, from all origins, Wafsi was a man of integrity and political leadership. But as much as the great man continues to cast his shadow over the political life of Jordan, much remains to be known about his thought and style of government, especially among the younger people. To mark the anniversary of his untimely death, a ceremony was held near the site where he now rests last week. Much has been written about him in the local press and JTV aired a special documentary that presented witness accounts about the man's life, ideas, leadership and death. What is probably worrying today is that certain politically-instigated elements to the Jordanian society are trying to rewrite Wafsi's history, redraw his image and redefine his legacy. They are doing a great injustice to the man. Wafsi's nationalism was pure and unblemished, his patriotism was whole and undivided, his commitment to Arab causes, particularly Palestine, sincere and courageous. That is why his assassination was much more than a physical liquidation, but of an attempt to destroy his vision at a time when the Arab world was in a state of disarray, when Jordan was healing its wounds and when Palestine appeared as a lost cause. Wafsi Al Tal was one of those men who had courage and commitment. He belonged to all Jordanians.



Tal

Kabarti's chivalry wins the day

The case of Karak deputy Nazih Ammarin has been put to rest. The Lower House turned down his resignation on Monday after Prime Minister Abdel Karim Al Kabarti publicly apologized for his behavior in the wake of the so-called bread riots more than two months ago.

Only one deputy voted for accepting the resignation. Kabarti's gesture of apologizing to Ammarin and appealing to him to withdraw his resignation has been described by deputies, including Ammarin himself, as an expression of "political chivalry" and as a "noble and courageous" initiative. So what promised to be as a tense and electrifying session ended as, to borrow from local reporters who covered the session, "a democratic festival." Ammarin was carried over the shoulders of fellow deputies while Mr. Kabarti received praise from across the hall including IAF deputies, who played a successful reconciliatory role. A happy ending to a story that began with allegations of personal insults over the phone by Mr. Kabarti against deputy Ammarin while he was in Karak apparently trying to mediate between the governor and rioters.

In his public address Monday, the prime minister revealed that he had already apologized to deputy Ammarin before His Majesty King Hussein some time following the Karak incident. He said that he had kissed deputy Ammarin's forehead in a gesture to ask for his forgiveness. In return, deputy Ammarin said that he was impressed with Mr. Kabarti's words, but that he would still like to read a statement explaining his position before allowing the House to vote on his resignation. He said he will respect the House's verdict. Eventually he was talked out of reading the statement, which explained the background of the Karak riots, which he said was not a political rebellion.

As is usually the case, political observers—those invisible but ubiquitous lot who know it all—believe the real winners, as opposite to the not-so-real winners, were Mr. Kabarti who made a successful comeback to the House he helped divide: only one extraordinary session ago; and the Islamic bloc, which dictated the behind-the-scenes moves while deputy Ammarin was thinking about how to respond to Kabarti's overture.

Mr. Kabarti walked out of the House a different man: Now he was being described by his opponents as chivalrous, bold, manly and politically courageous. Few weeks ago the opposition had a very different view of Kabarti. As to Jordanian democracy emerging as a winner, well, we only have to wait and see. The session is young, the agenda fresh and full and the real issues remain poised to be tackled.



Ammarin

The Star
Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly
Online

<http://www.arabia.com/star>



Celebrating the season of "Beaujolais nouveau", a French red wine, a reception was held at the Forte Grand Hotel, 27 November. The event was organized by Air France, the French Embassy and the Forte Grand. It was attended by a number of travel agents and invited guests.

A new transport agreement was signed between Israel and Jordan this week. According to the Minister of Transport, Mr. Nasser Al Lawzi, the agreement replaces an earlier one between the two countries. It simplifies transport procedures. Jordanian trucks will now be able to go right up to their destination in Israel on a "door to door" basis. The same goes for Israeli trucks. The agreement takes effect on 1 January. The new system will provide better facilities and incentives for Jordanian exporters and carriers. Also, it will lead to a reduction in transport fees and it will save time.



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LURIE'S WORLD



Our Say...

Jordan at odds with Israeli options

JORDANIAN DIPLOMACY has clearly taken a sharp turn into putting additional pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. This week's statements by His Majesty King Hussein to the BBC and Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti's interview with the Israeli paper *Ma'ariv* indicate a growing distrust of Netanyahu in contrast to Jordan's position of him after his election victory last May. Of course Jordan is not alone in criticizing the Israeli leader and his government's policies. Mr Netanyahu is being bashed by everybody these days and it is becoming the norm rather than the exception to hear statements by a European leader criticizing Israel and its leadership for stalling on its implementation of the Oslo accords. But the Jordanian official position must be hurting Netanyahu's image in Israel. Until his election, Jordan was viewed by Israelis as the Arab country which has moved closer than any to build a warm and genuine peace with Israel. King Hussein is admired and respected by all Israelis regardless of their political convictions and affiliations.

At the same time, the King's open frustration with the Netanyahu government reflects a worrying perception of the path the Israeli leader is taking. After giving him the benefit of the doubt, Jordan today has little faith left in Mr Netanyahu's sincerity in keeping Israel committed to the peace pledges it had made with the Palestinians and to others who are party to the Middle East peace process.

With such bleak developments one can hardly see a glimpse of hope left to bank on. The Israeli leader seems adamant to carry out a program of expanding Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories while doing his best to delay any real progress in implementing agreements reached with the Palestinians. It is not an understatement to say that the peace process that was born in Madrid, developed and boosted in Washington, Oslo, Araba, Cairo and Taba, is on the brink of total collapse.

What is worse than a collapse in the peace process is the alternative that is left to fill the vacuum. The Palestinians are being driven towards despair and confrontation, while Israel's peace partners like Jordan and Egypt can no longer stem the wave of public anger aimed at Israel and its provocations.

Netanyahu's choices in the coming days will be indicative of the shape of things to come. If he chooses to ignore the signals and warnings that are being sent by world leaders, then he will have to ready himself for all options. These options are bad for all. But most of all it is Israel that stands to lose a rare historical opportunity, created by the sharp political upheavals in the aftermath of the Gulf War, to strike peace deals with its neighbors and embark on an era of peace and regional cooperation. By wasting this chance, Israel and its leadership risk dragging the entire region into a state of tension, military build up and even war.

We don't believe that Israelis will opt for that alternative even if their leadership is foolishly moving that way. Mr Netanyahu can ignore warnings coming from abroad, but he must listen to pleas voiced by his own countrymen. ■



Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti hugs PNA president Yasser Arafat. Mr. Kabariti paid a one-day visit to Jericho last week to express solidarity with the Palestinians.

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The Arab Nation Looking for a better future

By Raif Najim

THE PRESENT features between Arab and Islamic states are characterized with antipathy and even repulsion: Iraq v. Syria, Egypt v. Libya and Qatar v. Saudi Arabia.

The same exists between the people of states like Algeria, Afghanistan, Kurdistan and Egypt.

The Gulf War turned the crisis between Israel and the Arab nation into a "twin crisis" between Israel and every other Arab state. These include: Israel v. Syria and Lebanon. This has broken up Arab solidarity into fragments. Even the "united Syrian and Lebanese issue" is now broken up into two portions.

The population of the Arab and Islamic states is estimated at 1.25 billion. But their political and economic development lags far behind. This is despite of their rich resources, that include oil, gold, raw materials, and agricultural land. Western oppression, occupation and possession of oil is another factor for underdevelopment.

The Americans consider the Arab's oil as their own, and the Arabs are "neighbors or just guards of that oil."

Also American policy seeks to discourage and prevent the use of Arab agriculture in the most effective way. This is the case of the vast lands in Sudan. The idea there has been to block the country from growing wheat so as to increase its dependence on American corn.

In spite of the huge agricultural land in Sudan, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, and in spite of the existence of rivers, the Arabs are far from self-sufficient in food security.

Today, Arab states spend more than \$80 billion on their import food bill and other luxurious items from the Western countries.

Hence, there should be economic integration between Arab and Islamic states to limit dependence on the West.

On the other hand, the Jerusalem issue should be an auxiliary factor for conciliation and understanding between Arab and Islamic states. It should not be a factor of divergence and dissimilarity.

The Judaization of Al Quds Ashraf will be *fait accompli* unless Arab and Islamic leaders abandon and eliminate their differences, and establish real Islamic solidarity between them and their nations.

Only then, the Arabs and Muslims can expect a real Islamic action for the liberation of Al Quds Ashraf.

The Israeli authorities act according to a well-planned Zionist strategy. Arab action nowadays however is but a reaction to every Israeli aggressive move. It is not of a continuous nature. The Israelis on the other hand take every opportunity to violate International law, and the human and legitimate rights of the Palestinians in Jerusalem and in the West Bank.

The self authority which they granted to the Palestinians

should be a transitional stage for the state of Palestine.

All governments of Israel up till today refused the resolutions issued by the Security Council, UN and UNESCO, which called on Israel to withdraw from the Occupied Territories including Jerusalem.

The governments of Israel do not differ in their strategy, whether they are Labor or Likud. They differ only in the tactics.

Although Israel refuses to stand by the international resolutions, and opposed the Palestinians uprising by breaking the bones of Palestinian children and killing some of them, yet it is not accused of terrorism or extremism.

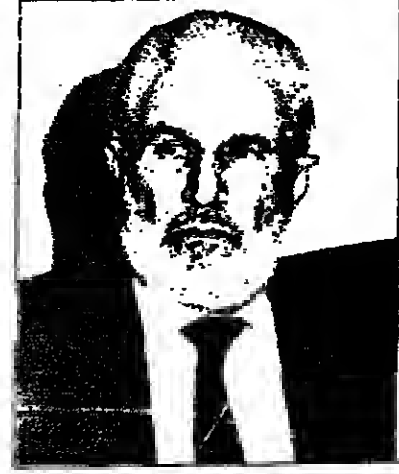
On the contrary, it is the Palestinians who are accused of terrorism and extremism. The Palestinian reaction is a result of the violations to their human rights and is a result of the frustration to Israeli action.

Israel has now seven atomic energy research centers at Daimon, Sourik, Udfat, Ailaboun, Ya'koub Well, Kfar Zakariya and Palmikeen. Atomic radiation was recorded from Daimon on both sides of Israel and Jordan. Also radiation from Sourik site was recorded due to the Radon Gas, which has a radiation effect of 50,000 bakeril, while the allowed limit is only 200. In spite of all this danger, Israel refuses to sign the agreement to stop atomic research.

If Israel really wants peace with the Arabs it must drop the expressions it never ceases to reiterate on every occasion. These include:

Israel did not use the atomic weapon in its previous wars when the Israeli-Arab crisis was at its heights. However, today it still insists on keeping those centers of atomic research and production. Israel wants to continue to maintain its superiority over the Arab nation.

If Israel really wants peace with the Arabs it must drop the expressions it never ceases to reiterate on every occasion. These include:



Najim

■ Jerusalem is the eternal united capital.

■ The Israelis are the favourable nation to God

■ Palestine is the land of Israel.

■ No return for the Palestinian refugees.

■ Settlements should be constructed and expanded all over the land.

If Israel would like to achieve peace in Jerusalem, it should agree to have two capitals in the holy city, one for Israel and one for the Palestinian state. It should stop immediately the so-called security blockade around Jerusalem, which is in fact an economic blockade against the Arabs living in the city.

If peace is found in Jerusalem, it is found all over the world. If peace is lost in Jerusalem, it is lost all over the world. Peace is not a word on paper, but it is an implementation on land. Peace needs justice, without which it is a call for surrender, and the Arab Nation will never surrender, and will take the opportunity when the status quo changes. The present situation of weakness will never continue. So let us hope for the future, pray for the future and work hard for the future. ■

Some scenarios have linked the relationship to Mafia concerns, particularly the control of gambling casinos, others have brought up the narcotics trade and linked the accident to the warfare of criminal clans.

However, with some diligent Turkish independent research, the picture has become clearer. It is argued that this triangular relationship has a similar root in Europe and specifically in Italy, with the idea born in the CIA headquarters in Langley.

Five years ago something of this nature came to the forefront with the discovery of an organization under the name of "Gladio." This was for the purpose of combatting a hypothetical communist army invading western Europe. Non-happened and non-existent.

This existence of such secretive organizations that are well-financed and connected to centers of power in Turkey must not drag it into mayhem. Turkey could well do away with that.

We are confident that Turkey follow a most moderate policies of Turkey, as well as the level headedness of the Turkish leadership. They must be aware of the dangers of the existence of an extra-legal organizations in their midst.

Such troubles are becoming nowadays all too familiar. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been the sole purpose for the creation of American-backed Mujahideen forces. The invasion was over, even the Soviet Union is over, and yet the Mujahideen are out and about practicing the art that the CIA has attempted to sweep under the carpet, without much success.

The same has happened in Italy, with urban guerrilla warfare, and gradually the protégés of Langley are becoming more apparent in Turkey. What is next and where? ■

An Islamic thinker, and the vice president of the Royal Committee for the Restoration of Al Aqsa Mosque

The peace camp's shame

The leftist camp is half of Israel and it isn't the weak half. It still controls most of the economic resources, the key positions, the intellectual and cultural creative forces.

By Uri Avnery

PEOPLE USED to say to my German-born mother-in-law, "You've lived in Israel for 50 years and you still don't speak Hebrew. Aren't you ashamed?" "Of course I'm ashamed," she would respond. But it's much easier to be ashamed than to learn Hebrew!"

One might pose a similar question to half of Israel's population, the secular-democratic half.

"You've taken a hard blow. Why aren't you fighting back? Why are you in the depths of despair?"

The answer, of course, is that it is much easier to languish in despair than gear up for a fight.

Our state, for which many of us have spilled our blood, is being ravaged before our eyes. The religious-haredi bloc, numbering less than one-fifth of the population, in close partnership with the nationalist-rightist minority is attacking the very foundations of our country—our courts, our Knesset, our educational system, our media, our army, and our scientific and cultural institutions.

Meanwhile the other camp, which lost the election by a mere 30,000 votes, stands by transfixed like a rabbit about to be devoured by a snake. This camp's sole response to its political defeat was a series of sand memorial rallies to its slain leader.

Even the mourning cannot obscure the peace camp's shame. The hundreds of thousands gathered at Rabin Square were not even asked for a contribution for a memorial site for Rabin (a shekel per head would have sufficed!). It has been built instead with a donation from a controversial German Jewish millionaire.

Half of Israel seems to be wallowing in resignation. "Everything's lost.... It's time to pack...." After all they multiply so quickly, in a few years they will be the majority. And the obvious conclusion: "There's nothing we can do."

The elections demonstrated that the public is split into five



Avnery

blocs. The rightist camp is compromised of the haredi-religious bloc, the Oriental-secular-traditional bloc and the Russian bloc. The Ashkenazi made up the leftist camp.

But in politics nothing is a given. The division between the camps is not by divine decree. To move the dividing line requires a fight. We must fight for the Oriental public and for the Russian public. If the available means are not suitable, other means must be used instead.

The tens of thousands of young people shown on TV huddled over memorial candles could turn into warrior troops just like Habad. They need leadership, a fighting spirit and a call to arms for a massive political struggle.

The definitive battle, however, will not be fought in the political but in the ideological arena.

The peace camp's despair comes from its implicit acceptance of the point of this rabbinical story: Two carts are proceeding in opposite directions on a narrow bridge. The religious cart is loaded, the secular cart is empty. The empty cart, naturally, should give way to the full one.

This is a grotesque distortion of reality. The secular cart is loaded with living content, open to world culture. And the bridge, as someone commented, is wide with many lanes; and it can accommodate our cart along with many others."

What we need is a large committee of respected individuals — from the literary world, from film and theatre, from the media, law, science and education, from the army and the economy, Jews and Arabs, men and women — to wage the unrelenting ideological media battle of the secular, democratic, liberal, peace-supporting society against its adversaries.

We must also have task forces to create facts on the ground, in kindergartens, schools, in school curricula, and in scientific and cultural institutions.

The fight must take place not

only in Herzliya but also in Ofakim, Sderot and Kiryat Shmona. New structures must be created wherever they are needed, to compete with the proselytizers and the haredi sects. Extensive funds must be mobilized to direct such a vast operation.

The leftist camp is half of Israel and it isn't the weak half. It still controls most of the economic resources, the key positions, the intellectual and cultural creative forces.

If all these elements were to unite, intent on fighting for the survival of our state, our society and our values, who could withstand the attack? ■

Avnery is a leading figure in the Peace Now. The Jerusalem Post



Middle East Peace by Khairi Jaber

Scandal in Turkey

HARDLY ANY of the official Turkish media, apart from the privately owned ones, mentioned anything about the recent crisis that has been gripping Turkey for the last week or so.

In the international press, nothing of any worth has been mentioned about a simple, yet tragic traffic accident. It involved one Turkish member of Parliament who was severely injured, one retired high ranking police officer who lost his life, and one right-wing militant who was wanted for murder, and his female companion.

There was also plenty of talk about the disappearance of some pistol silencers in the back of the car of death, which does not justify, even to the most naive among us, the love for guns.

The story has become most intriguing due to the odd relationship of this triangle. Many questions are now raised regarding an MP from the south east region of Turkey, known for his anti-PKK sentiments, his friendship with a retired police officer, and a wanted well-known right-wing activist.

Some scenarios have linked the relationship to Mafia concerns, particularly the control of gambling casinos, others have brought up the narcotics trade and linked the accident to the warfare of criminal clans.

However, with some diligent Turkish independent research, the picture has become clearer. It is argued that this triangular relationship has a similar root in Europe and specifically in Italy, with the idea born in the CIA headquarters in Langley.

Five years ago something of this nature came to the forefront with the discovery of an organization under the name of "Gladio." This was for the purpose of combatting a hypothetical communist army invading western Europe. Non-happened and non-existent.

This existence of such secretive organizations that are well-financed and connected to centers of power in Turkey must not drag it into mayhem. Turkey could well do away with that.

We are confident that Turkey follow a most moderate policies of Turkey, as well as the level headedness of the Turkish leadership. They must be aware of the dangers of the existence of an extra-legal organizations in their midst.

Such troubles are becoming nowadays all too familiar. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been the sole purpose for the creation of American-backed Mujahideen forces. The invasion was over, even the Soviet Union is over, and yet the Mujahideen are out and about practicing the art that the CIA has attempted to sweep under the carpet, without much success.

The same has happened in Italy, with urban guerrilla warfare, and gradually the protégés of Langley are becoming more apparent in Turkey. What is next and where? ■

Star Online

http://www.arabia.com/star

Business scene

Jordanian exports to Arab countries over the first five months of this year reached JD 153 million. The exports include foodstuffs, live animals, soft drinks, cigarettes, lubricating oils, chemicals, equipment and other manufactured commodities.

The International Company for Industrial, Commercial and Touristic Investments has signed contracts with French and British companies to prepare and execute designs and schemes for the Hilton and Sheraton five-star hotels in Amman. The company's paid-up capital is JD 14 million. The costs of these hotels are estimated at JD 48 million. The construction of the Sheraton Hotel will start next October and open in April 1998. The 300-room hotel costs JD 27 million. The costs of the Hilton Hotel is JD 21 million. It has 226 rooms and will be opened in the same year. There are other 12 hotel projects to be executed in Jordan at a cost of JD 150 million.

Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia last year were estimated at \$100 million compared with imports of \$130 million from Saudi markets. These record a sharp rise of 100% as Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia reached JD 54 million in the first half of this year. The Saudi technical team who visited Jordan recently, headed by Hamid Al Oufi expressed his satisfaction with the advanced technology used in Jordan by agricultural firms. Saudi Arabia is expected to double its imports from Jordan, particularly after the signing of the commercial agreement between the two countries three months ago.

The volume of bounced cheques over the first half of this year rose to 20700 cheques valued at JD 216.7 million. Bounced cheque averaged JD 1048 compared with JD 910 last year. The reasons behind this phenomenon are the economic recession and the shortage in domestic liquidity.

The Industrial Development Bank has granted 104 loans at a total of JD 22.6 million in the first six months of this year. These loans went mainly to the tourism and industrial sectors.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 4 September

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1038	1.1093
DM	0.4754	0.4778
SFR	0.5849	0.5878
FRF	0.1389	0.1396
YEN (100)	0.6467	0.6508
DM (100)	0.4240	0.4261
£ (100)	0.0467	0.0469

Jordanian electricity sector comes nearer to privatization

AMMAN (Star)—In its efforts to sell large chunks of state industries, the government this week embarked on a program that will eventually lead to the privatization of electricity.

One of the most important companies in the country, the government is pursuing a two-step strategy to privatize the JD 230 million industry.

What happened this week was the conversion of the Jordan Electric Power Authority (JEPA) into a National Electric Power Company, says the Minister of Energy Hashim Al Dabbas.

Electricity is still in government hands but it is to be wholly run on commercial basis.

It can be argued that this step will allow the government to fatten the industry further and increase its profitability so it can sell it at a higher price when the time comes.

The authority has managed to electrify 99 percent of the country at the highest international standards, according to Mohammad Said Arafah, the director of JEPA.

Minister Al Dabbas says that

electricity is a vital factor for life and industry and a reflection of the level of progress.

The first electric power company in the country was established in 1938. This was followed by another firm in Zerga. Both were merged into one. In 1961, the North Electric Power Company was established in Irbid and was able to provide electricity to many areas in the Kingdom, Al Dabbas says.

In 1967, the government established the Jordan Electric Power Authority. The government became responsible for

generating and distributing electricity while the electric power companies in Amman and Irbid were still operating in the districts.

Power generation in Jordan is high and will be sufficient till at least the year 2005. But there is not so much strain as much as dependence on oil fuel from outside. The minister says that 35 percent of fuel consumption in the Kingdom is used for generating electricity.

Over the years, the electricity authority has become one of the major industries in the country. Its total investment expenditure is about JD 500 million. At present, its total assets are JD 1100 million.

"We have retained revenues for consultation estimated at \$6 million," the minister adds. "The foundation of a national electric power company to run according to commercial basis is a step towards privatization and openness." It would mean greater competition and financial independence, the minister says.

Later on, the Ministry of Energy will offer licenses for other power companies. These national companies will be in charge of producing and distributing electricity.

This is in line with the government philosophy which is to reduce monopolistic control, increase competition and upgrade the standard of services offered to citizens.

The role of government will be to provide energy strategies and long-term planning.



Dabbas

There are 2523 employed in the electricity sector. With the creation of the company, these workers will be reduced. But the workers need not worry. Arafah says that a decision has already been made to transfer these workers into the Ministry of Energy. The workers will have their full rights and allowances.

The Minister said that the new company will be linked to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (as it is the case with other companies in the Kingdom). The company's total capital reserve is JD 270 million.

But what will happen to electricity prices, people are wondering. With every new move to the private sector, one can expect a rise in prices. Dr Dabbas, however, said that the government won't make such increase at the present time.

Zara raises its capital to JD 40 million

AMMAN (Star)—The Zara Investment (holding) Co., is to increase its capital from JD 25 million to JD 40 million.

The chairman of its board of directors, Khalil Al Talhoumi said that this rise is being made to cover the investment requirements of the company's tourist projects that are estimated at \$180 million in Amman, Petra, Aqaba and the Dead Sea.

The company has offered tenders for the project of the Dead Sea Hotel and the Touristic Village at \$70 million.

It is also participating in the Jordan

Hotel project at \$12 million. Mr Al Talhoumi called on the government to increase investment incentives in the tourist sector.

The company was established in 1994 because it believed that the region is witnessing a boom in tourism.

The holding company is 95.5 percent owned by local capital and 4.5 percent is owned by Arab investors.

The company has tourist investments in Amman, Petra, Aqaba and the Dead Sea. It is also participating in the Jordan National Authority.

Fair designed to attract mutual trade between region and world

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

UNDER THE patronage of the Minister of State, Mr Mufleh Al Reheimi, the Middle East International Trade Fair was inaugurated last Sunday at the Amman International Exhibition in Marj Al Hamam.

The fair, in which 32 local and international companies are participating in, is a step towards putting Jordan on the right course with regard to the development of its commercial and industrial sectors. Other companies participating in the fair are from Brazil, Italy, the Czech Republic and Syria.

The exhibition is an opportunity for businessmen to get

acquainted with the latest technology employed by foreign companies.

A large number of light and heavy industries were on display. Those were metal cutters, stone processors and hydromechanics. Light industries products included coffee machines, ceramics, and readymade wear.

Companies all over the world are thinking seriously of marketing their products in the Middle East as a possible thriving outlet.

Jordan is one of those countries which has a strategic location and a potential to promote its commercial and industrial development.

Beside its efforts towards reforming the economy and attracting investments, Jordan

can serve as a crossing point for foreign products to other regional countries. "Most of the foreign companies have been invited to Jordan for the first time," said Munther Al Tamimi, the marketing manager of Universal Exhibition Corp. He told *The Star* that the fair is a chance for these companies to have agents in Jordan.

The Italian section in the fair is the biggest one as 28 Italian companies are participating. In the last three years, the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade has been responsible for increasing the participation of the Italian companies in the region.

"The reason behind the imminent presence of the Italian companies in the fair is that because Italy is the second importer from and fourth exporter to Jordan," said Mr Raffaele De Benedetti, the charge d'affaires of the Italian Embassy. Asked if Jordanian companies can be competitive to other foreign companies, he said that there are some fields like water isolation which Jordan can improve. "For mutual benefits, there can be joint ventures between Jordan and other countries displaying their products in the fair," he added. The fair ends today, Thursday.



Veterinary vaccine project signed

AN AGREEMENT was signed this week between the Minister of Planning Dr Rima Khalaf and the German Ambassador in Amman Dr Heinrich Reiner that aims at further technical cooperation between Jordan and Germany.

The agreement centers on aid for the "Production of Veterinary Vaccines and Sera," a project that is carried out by the Jordan Center for Veterinary Vaccines (JCVC), in cooperation with Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) in

Germany. This is the final phase of the project and Germany has now contributed DM 9.7 million to the project.

The aim of the project is to enable the JCVC to supply the Jordanian market with high-quality veterinary vaccines. In the current phase, the JCVC will be converted into an independent enterprise run on commercial basis.

The project started in 1986 and is scheduled to continue until 1997.

24 Jordanian projects to be discussed at Cairo economic summit

AMMAN (Star)—As the countdown to the Cairo Economic Summit begins, Jordan unveils 24 projects in the fields of energy, mining, transport, tourism, communications and electricity which it will submit to the venue on 11 October.

Jordanian companies from the public and private sectors are also to participate in the summit. Dr Yousef Mansour of the Ministry of Planning said.

There are still doubts if the Cairo economic summit will be convened on time. However, all participating countries have already prepared their projects.

A book is to be issued containing further details of those 24 projects in addition to booklets on investment in Jordan and the new economic regulations.

Jordanian projects have a more local angle rather than a regional one, Dr Mansour said.

He also maintained that the new economic regulations will lead to a noticeable progress in Jordan's economy. The custom's law will mean more trading, because the price of commodities will be lowered and raise the level of productivity and income of citizens.

The law of securities will increase the competence of the financial markets, and the new International Trade Law will protect the local industries against flotation. This will lead to new job opportunities in the private sector.

Adopting these new economic regulations by the Jordanian government, will have a positive effect on the list of projects that are to be discussed in the summit. This will also help Jordan to fulfill its objective to be a centre for commerce in the region, Dr Mansour added.

Saudi-Cairo Bank receives lower rating

CAPITAL INTELLIGENCE announced that it has downgraded the long-term rating of Saudi-Cairo Bank (SCB) from BBB to BBB-.

The bank's short-term rating is reaffirmed at A-2 and a stable outlook has been assigned for the next 12 months.

With total assets of \$5 billion at end 1995, SCB is Saudi Arabia's eighth largest bank, controlling a 5.5 percent market share. The bank's capital is 55 percent owned by private Saudi interests, 25 percent by the state-controlled Public Investment Fund and 20 percent by the Cairo-based Banque du Caire.

Most recently, United Saudi Commercial Bank's chairman, Prince Al Waleed Bin Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saudi, acquired 33.4% of SCB's capital. A merger between SCB and United Saudi is the most likely scenario over the medium term and this prospect is viewed as positive as the two bank's profiles complement each other in many respects.

Middle East Bank open doors

By Judy Aita

UNITED NATIONS—The United States and Russia last week formally opened the agreement for the Bank for Economic Cooperation and Development in the Middle East and North Africa, paving the way for economic and commercial integration of the region and hopefully bolstering the sagging peace process.

Representatives of the two nations, co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, deposited the agreement with the UN secretary general and declared the pact open for signatures by prospective members. The bank will be located in Cairo. It can begin operations once prospective members complete their domestic ratifications and the agreement enters into force.

The bank has capital of \$3,300 million and drawing rights of about \$5,000 million, the founders said.

"This unique new institution, the result of an historic joint proposal by Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians, is designed to support the Middle East peace process by strengthening and expanding the economic foundation necessary for a durable peace in the region," a joint US-Russian statement said.

The agreement, "will promote private sector investment, regional infrastructure development and regional economic cooperation." The projected bank will complement the work of existing institutions such as the World Bank and "will support regional efforts to establish an open, competitive regional economy characterized by cooperative relations and sustainable economic growth," the statement added.

US Ambassador Edward Gnehm said the United States believes the bank will play a crucial role in the peace process.

The fundamental aim of the agreement is "to set up a bank unique to the Middle East to deal with regional development projects, to help economic dialogue in the region, and to be specifically tailored to the problems of the region and bring the economic benefits of peace to people," said Gnehm, the deputy permanent representative to the UN.

"We know that peace becomes durable, permanent, and reinforced when people feel the benefits of peace and that means in their lives, that means their income, that means their jobs, and that means their economic well-being," the US ambassador said.

Russian Ambassador Vasily Sidorov noted that the bank adds two dimensions to the Mideast peace effort.

The Middle East bank "has a political dimension: it has an economic dimension as well," Sidorov said. "We believe it is of specific importance right now because the peace process

in the Middle East is not in its best shape."

The bank "has a certain symbolic importance underlying that we—as co-sponsors of this peace process—must attach paramount importance to pushing ahead with this process and we believe this fact will have certain positive influence on the peace process in the Middle East," said Sidorov, the first deputy permanent representative to the UN.

Both envoys appeared confident that the peace process would continue and the bank would soon be supporting water projects and other development efforts along with social programs.

There is a peace process, both of our governments are committed to it. We have been through good times and bad times and (the Palestinians and Israelis) remain committed in the process," Gnehm said.

Business Chronicle

True economic cooperation

AS THE peace process drags forward and Israel's economy gradually becomes integrated with that of the region, we are often promised the fruits of such integration. While it is understood that the process of peace is a long one, and by no means complete, this might be an appropriate time, nonetheless, to see how peace at the governmental level is being translated into peace on the commercial front.

One of the most noticeable results in terms of business relations has been the reduction in tariffs on Jordanian and Israeli goods. Although outright prohibitions on some goods still exist on items such as tomato paste and table salt for the case of Jordan, both sides have undertaken a process of reducing tariffs on selected items. Israel, for example, hopes to reduce tariffs on textiles from 72 percent to 12 percent by the year 2000. Moreover, according to the Agreement on Trade and Cooperation between the two countries, Israel has agreed to reduce tariff duties by 10 percent for two years and an additional five percent the third year on items including infant food, cheese and dried origination in Israel. For its part, Jordan has agreed to reduce tariffs by 50 percent on such items as cosmetics, lenses, and kitchenware, and by 100 percent on paints, chocolates, and televisions originating in Jordan. In their place however, have been set up a series of bureaucratic measures which makes one year for the days of higher tariffs.

Both the Jordanian and Israeli sides have set up a series of administrative procedures which willingly or not, impede trade. Regulations as to the number and type of vehicles allowed to carry goods over the border, travel documentation, insufficient facilities at border crossings, and testing requirements have added unnecessary time and costs for the businessmen.

These administrative procedures, which are undoubtedly common in most parts of the world, have turned into bureaucratic nightmares in this part. Only trucks registered prior to 1967, for example, are allowed to enter Jordan from Israel. Moreover, these vehicles must recross the border prior to a 15:00 deadline, which if violated, offenders of this rule must undergo a 12 day security check costing approximately \$700.

Unfortunately, the bureaucratic red tape does not end there. There are numerous other examples of administrative procedures which appear to have no other purpose other than to frustrate business activity. While there has been clear progress on the tariff front, the respective governments do not appear to be making much headway on the administrative aspects of conducting trade which is essential for true economic cooperation.

AFM unaffected by American strikes on Iraq

THE STOCK indicator at the Amman Financial Market was record high at nearly 145 points this week. Such an upward trend continued from last week. The starting point was 141 points, registering a further push at the beginning of this week. This is really encouraging news for investors. The last rise represents the highest increase in three months.

It was driven by the noticeable increase in the shares value of the Arab Bank at JD 4 per share.

The bank announced its mid-annual earnings at JD 95 million, its share closed at JD 235 which is the highest since last March.

The increase favored the traded stock of the banking sector as the banks indicator rose to 180 points. This figure was last recorded in May.

However after the American missile strikes on Iraq last Tuesday, the dealers felt slightly perplexed and traded "with a vigilant attitude" of what might happen later on. This atmosphere continued, however, share prices remained stable. Some brokers say that there are internal local factors that provide support and backing for share prices. External factors are of no major concern.

Total dealings at the end of this week were at JD 646,000, 23 percent of which was made on the parallel market.

However, on the international markets, the American aggression on Iraq has led to a rise in the crude oil prices and greatly influenced the European and American stock exchanges. The price of Brent crude oil was up to reach \$22.75 per barrel (a rise of \$1.21). The American crude oil price was up to reach \$23.48 per barrel. Economic analysts expect the price of the western Texas Crude oil to reach \$30.

The British, French and German Stock exchanges witnessed a decline, after the American strikes, while the prices of the American shares recorded a sharp fall. Dealers were anxious of a further increase in interest rates. Dow Jones fell 50 points to reach 5564 points.

The price of the dollar and gold, being the safe shelter for funds, shows a remarkable rise.

The Star
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MARKET WATCH

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	%	SUNDAY	%	MONDAY	%	TUESDAY	%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Paper & Cardboard Zampa Invest. & Education Wool Industries 	4.92 4.81 4.72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Steel Industry Wool Industries Livestock and Poultry 	4.83 3.76 3.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arab Medical Appliances Arab Electrical Industries Middle East Bank 	4.62 4.55 2.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Tobacco & Cigarettes Arab Medical Appliances Arab Electrical Industries 	5.00 4.41 4.35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Arab Insurance Jordan Wood Industries JIMCO 	5.00 4.95 4.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Wood Industries Amman Investment Bank The Industrial commercial 	4.81 4.00 3.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermed. petro-Chemical Universal Modern Industries Jordan Wood Industries 	3.22 3.10 4.99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Gulf Insurance Universal Modern Industries Jordan Wood Industries 	4.98 4.84 4.42
General Price Pointer	144,340	144,270	143,910	144,800			
Trade Volume	572878	590246	747228	697496			
Stock Volume	522732	514143	622254	722852			
Highest Traded Stocks							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livestock and Poultry 125.023 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livestock and Poultry 131.237 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arab Bank 102.890 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livestock and Poultry 132.428 			

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

Palestine Post



Having a think: A Palestinian sits in front of one of the shops in Hebron

Human Rights Watch condemns Israeli torture

Human Rights Watch/Middle East sent an open letter to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, urging him to take a strong stand against the torture of Palestinians by agents of the Israeli General Security Service, as he

recently did against the beatings, captured on videotape, by border police of Palestinian workers. Criticizing the decision by Israel's Supreme Court on November 14 to allow interrogators to use physical force and other abusive methods against a Palestinian detainee, Human Rights Watch/Middle East urged the Prime Minister to explicitly forbid all techniques of interrogation that amount to torture or that violate the Israeli penal code's prohibition on the use of force.

Human Rights Watch said "We are writing this open letter to urge you to take a similarly strong stand on another human rights issue: the torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian security suspects that is practiced systematically by the General Security Service (GSS). The need for ruling on November 14 by Israel's Supreme Court, sitting as the High Court of Justice. In its decision in *Abd Al Aziz Hamdan v. The General Security Service* (HCJ 8049/96), the court lifted an interim injunction that prevented interrogators from using physical force, including violent shaking, on detainee Hamdan. As a human rights organization, Human Rights Watch regrets the court's failure in this case to rule on whether the practice of vigorously and repeatedly shaking an interrogatee back and forth by his collar, which has caused the death of at least one Palestinian, violates domestic and international law.

In our view, this type of shaking contravenes both the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which Israel has ratified, and article 27 of Israel's penal code. That article prohibits public servants from using, directing, or threatening the use of force or violence for the purpose of extracting a confession or information relating to an offense.

Algerians vote in defiance of threats by Islamic extremists

By John Daniszewski
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

CAIRO—Defying threats of violence by Islamic extremists who have waged a fierce four-year insurrection, Algerians voted Thursday on constitutional changes to give their president greater powers and outlaw political parties based on religion, language or ethnicity.

The vote represented the latest attempt by Algeria's ruling regime to steer the country toward normalcy after a civil war that has claimed about 60,000 lives since 1992.

Polls close at 8 pm and the measure passed comfortably. Algerians have been looking for an escape from the bloody conflict that has pitted its military-backed government against the banned Islamic Salvation Front, known by its French acronym FIS.

FIS was headed to victory in the country's first multi-party elections in January 1992 when the country's military, alarmed at the prospect of an Islamic takeover after three decades of one-party rule by the National Liberation Front, stepped in and canceled the vote.

Since then, fighting has left the North African country of 28 million people in agony, with the violence occasionally spilling over into Europe. Militants have resorted to car bombs and beheadings and have targeted journalists, foreign workers, priests and nuns for assassination.

The government has used similarly tough methods, including air raids, napalm and torture in its efforts to crush guerrilla groups.

Until recently, the government had appeared to be gaining the upper hand. But Islamic groups in the seven weeks leading to the referendum showed that they are still a potent force, launching a series of attacks and bombings that have killed about 250 people.

The entire 140,000-strong army was on alert for last Thursday's voting, and tens of thousands of security officers were deployed to protect 35,533 polling stations. By early afternoon, more than half of the electorate had gone to the polls, according to the Interior Ministry.

The vote was being watched closely by Algeria's neighbors, including Egypt, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia, whose governments are fearful that Algerian-style Islamic violence could spread across North Africa.

"Today is an important day to determine the future of Algeria," commented Egypt's *Al Akhbar* daily newspaper. "The government's proposed amendments (to the constitution) are the foundation for the stability that is aspired to by the Algerian people."

A main principle in the revised constitution is that parties should not base their appeals on religion. It addresses the problem felt by many governments in the Arab world: that they are being drawn into bidding wars with opposition groups over who is the more Islamic.

If approved by a majority of Algeria's 16.4 million voters, the revised charter would strengthen the powers of President Liamine Zeroul, allowing him to appoint most senior government officials and a portion of a new Senate. However, the president would be subject to impeachment and be limited to two five-year terms of office.

Besides Islamists, some of the strongest opposition to the constitutional changes has come in the mountainous Berber region of Kabylia. Berbers, the indigenous people of Algeria before the 7th century Arab conquest, constitute at least a quarter of the population and have long wanted constitutional recognition of their language.

Supporting the referendum is the National Liberation Front, which waged the eight-year rebellion against French colonial rule that killed an estimated 1 million people before attaining independence in 1962.

Netanyahu proves construction of homes in Jordan Valley

By Marjorie Miller
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—Even as the Arab League condemned his expansion of Jewish settlements, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last Sunday approved construction of hundreds of new homes in the occupied Jordan Valley and vowed that Israel will retain control of the area in a permanent accord with the Palestinians.

The move to fortify Israeli control in the lush strip of West Bank land came days after Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak warned Netanyahu in a letter that settlement expansion threatens to "destroy" relations between Israel and its Arab peace partners.

And it came as His Majesty King Hussein told the British Broadcasting Corp. television he is becoming impatient with Netanyahu's lack of progress in negotiations with the Palestinians and that he fears for the future of the peace process.

"Without visible progress in implementing agreements reached earlier between the Israeli government and the Palestinians in particular, we are at the mercy of events," King Hussein said in Sunday's interview. "Anything could happen that could throw us completely off the track we have chosen."

The hard-line Netanyahu rejects the premise of trading occupied land for peace that underlies the agreements his predecessors from the Labor Party signed with the Palestinians. Although he has promised to uphold the accords, Israel and the Palestinians have been deadlocked for weeks over the terms of an Israeli troop withdrawal from the West Bank town of Hebron that is required by an interim agreement.

In the last six weeks, Netanyahu has moved decisively to expand Jewish settlements in what Arab leaders view as a violation of the spirit of the agreements. Netanyahu allowed the sale of 3,000 apartments that had been frozen during the previous peace negotiations and authorized the construction of 3,000 new units in the West Bank settle-

ments of Emmanuel and Kiryat Sefer.

Netanyahu also has said his government will expand Israeli communities in the Golan Heights. Israel captured that territory from Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War, and Syrian President Hafez Assad says it must be returned if he is to make peace with Israel.

Last Sunday, Jordan Valley settler leaders presented Netanyahu with a plan that would nearly triple the Jewish population of that area to 15,000 residents in five years. Afterward, Netanyahu issued a statement that the fertile border region—part of the West Bank territory captured from Jordan in the 1967 war—is "inseparable" from the State of Israel.

"The prime minister said that the government has total commitment to the development and prosperity of the Jordan Valley and (that) even in a tough budget year such as this, the government will budget

money for the development of infrastructure and roads in the Jordan Valley," the statement said.

David Levy, chairman of the Jordan Valley District Council, said Netanyahu gave the go-ahead for the construction of 350 housing units in the region next year. He said the settlers told Netanyahu that "there must be more than just natural growth in the Jordan Valley" and that the prime minister "agreed to almost every word we put in front of him."

Netanyahu spokesman David Bar-Ilan confirmed that new housing was approved but said he did not have the figures. He said the expansion—large for a current Jewish population of about 5,500—would be consis-



Netanyahu

tent with the prime minister's decision to allow natural growth in the Jewish settlements.

Bar-Ilan said the government defines "natural growth"

not only as births and marriages but as allowing anyone who wants to move to the settlements to do so, without providing incentives or restrictions.

Arab leaders are not likely to view Jordan Valley construction favorably in the current political climate.

Even before Netanyahu's announcement, Arab League diplomats meeting in Cairo issued a statement demanding that Israel stop building new settlements and dismantle existing ones immediately.

Notably, the Arab League did not agree to a Syrian demand that Arab states freeze any diplomatic relations they have with Israel. Arab League Secretary-General Ahmad Esmat Abdel Meguid said the organization would leave that decision to individual members.

Last week, Egypt's Mubarak sent a letter to Netanyahu warning that settlement expansion "in occupied Arab lands

... hampers the peace process and all the efforts to advance it."

According to the text published in the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, Mubarak said he believes Netanyahu's settlement expansion "is meant to destroy the trust between Israel and its Arab neighbors and encourage (the parties) not to honor the peace agreements which have been signed."

Bar-Ilan said Netanyahu responded that he felt his settlement policy was in keeping with the peace process and that he would not prevent Jews from moving to Judea and Samaria, the biblical name for the West Bank.

Israel signed a peace agreement with Egypt in 1979 and one with Jordan in 1994. Relations with Egypt have been lukewarm, while Jordan argued after Netanyahu's election in May that the Arab world should give the Likud leader the benefit of the doubt.

Israeli border police mistreat Arabs, official says

By Nicholas Goldberg
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—Violence against Arabs is the rule, rather than the exception, among Israeli border police, according to a letter written by Israeli Attorney General Michael Ben-Yair.

In the letter, Ben-Yair said he was convinced the country was facing "a widespread phenomenon ... not isolated incidents."

The data "paints a sad and sorry picture of a deep-rooted tradition of violence towards the Arabs among the border police, just because they are Arabs," he wrote. "There are also those who say this phenomenon exists, though to a lesser degree, in the other security services."

The letter, which was addressed to Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani and obtained by journalists here, comes in the wake of a series of revelations about beatings of Palestinians by Israeli officers. In it, Ben-Yair

said he believed that officers convicted of abuse should be prosecuted more strenuously and punished more harshly.

Of 264 complaints this year against border police for brutality, he noted, 58 files were closed because the investigation could not be completed. 53 cases were not pursued for lack of evidence and 25 were found unjustified. In 35 cases policemen were prosecuted, and the rest remain under investigation. Ben-Yair said many of the cases were thrown out because of serious difficulties in collecting evidence.

Ben-Yair's remarks came after several weeks of bad publicity involving the Israeli security forces. A week ago, Israel television broadcast an amateur video showing two border policemen kicking, beating and humiliating six Palestinian workers who had been caught sneaking into Israel without a permit. The two policemen have been charged with aggravated assault and abuse of power, and have been placed under house arrest until

the start of their trial.

In another case earlier this month, four Israeli soldiers killed a Palestinian who had failed to stop at an Israeli roadblock—and were sentenced by a military court to a fine of 1 agora, or one-third of 1 cent. The court remarked that "under the circumstances in the field, we would have acted as these soldiers did."

In still another case last week, four border policemen were accused of beating a Palestinian who had no permit to be in Israel. According to the charges brought against them, they beat him with a club to the head until the club broke and he lost consciousness.

In a survey by the Ministry of Education that was released earlier last week, 37 percent of Israeli students admitted that they "hated" Arabs. Two-thirds agreed they did not want to give Arabs full equality of rights.

Last Wednesday, Kahalani acknowledged that anti-Arab prejudice should be wiped out among border police, but cautioned against cast-

ing blame too widely.

"We sent these young men to the toughest points of friction with the Palestinians," he told Israel radio. "We cannot accept this in our society ... but we must also refrain from pounding on these people and placing all the blame on them."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also condemned brutality against Palestinians after the video was shown on Israel television last week, but he said he believed such incidents were rare.

Also a UN committee charged that, contrary to expectations, Israel's attitude toward human rights in the Occupied Territories has deteriorated since the beginning of the peace process.

According to the Special Committee for the Investigation of Israeli Behavior in the Territories, which submitted its annual report last week, the beating of Palestinians by civilians, soldiers and policemen "exhibits a culture of sadism," according to a report in the Israeli daily *Haaretz*.

Gulf War vets seek restitution for disabilities

By William D. Montalbano
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

LONDON—Jan Hill, a registered nurse and army reservist, played rugby, rough-and-tumble, until he was 43. At 44, he volunteered for army service during the Gulf War and was in charge of the operating room at a British military hospital in Saudi Arabia.

"Now I'm totally disabled, a 50-year-old in the body of an 80-year-old," Hill said. "My central nervous system has broken down, my immune system is shot, I have inflammation of the brain. I need 24-hour care."

Like more than 1,100 other British veterans of the 1991 Gulf War who are known to be ill, Hill believes that he is the victim of friendly medical fire: a cocktail of vaccines administered by British forces

against chemical warfare.

In Britain, as in the United States, veterans are campaigning for recognition of their ailments as service-connected, and seeking compensation for them. There is growing public awareness and the prospect of political support for the first time.

"I think justice will come, but there's still a lot of pushing to do," said Hill, who is president of the largest association of British forces inoculated for the war.

Hill said that lobbying by veterans has won a promise from the opposition Labor Party, strongly favored to win elections in the spring, to create Britain's first government department of veteran affairs.

In the meantime, the British Defense Ministry expects a decision in the next few weeks from a blue-ribbon medical council on the best way to continue research.

Lawyers representing the sick veterans say they will not wait for the official results. In January, they will launch an independent medical study.

"The results may give us a start in proceeding against the (Defense Ministry) for personal injury compensation," attorney Joanne Masters said.

"As many as 4,000 veterans may have illnesses triggered by toxic reaction to inoculations that included vaccines against anthrax and plague," said Tony Flint, a regional coordinator for the Association of Gulf War Veterans and Families that Hill leads. "Many still serving are not willing to come forward because it would ruin their careers."

More than 100 gulf war vets have died of ailments that survivors ascribe to the inoculations. In all, Flint said, about two percent of the 51,000 British troops assigned to the Gulf are affected by the

initial inoculations and subsequent doses of Nerve Agent Pre-Treatment Sets tablets.

"That's about the same percentage as for the Americans, but in the United States money has been appropriated and there is a Veterans Administration. Here, we have neither," Flint said.

In October, the British government acknowledged that a relative handful of troops in the gulf may have been exposed to potentially damaging organophosphate pesticides. But it is not convinced that there may be an identifiable broader cause.

"We are keeping an open mind, but so far the idea that there may be a gulf war illness is unproved," said a senior Defense Ministry spokesman.

The veterans exhibit a broad range of symptoms including chronic fatigue,



Flicking the V sign: Many veterans however continue to suffer from the "Gulf War syndrome"

muscle weakness, sleeplessness, depression, asthma, headaches and skin complaints. Birth defects also

are more common among the children of gulf vets than in the general population, the veterans say.

US defense chief checks safety of new military compounds in Saudi Arabia

By Bradley Graham
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia—When Army Lt. James Longfellow arrived in Saudi Arabia last summer leading a Patriot Missile Maintenance Detachment, he hoped to see some local sights. But most of what he has glimpsed outside the barricaded complex now housing nearly all US military personnel in the Saudi capital has been from inside a moving vehicle.

"I've been here 5 1/2 months and haven't seen anything but the highways going to and from our missile sites," Longfellow remarked. "It's a little disappointing."

Since the truck bomb attack in June against a US military housing complex in Dhahran, which killed 19 airmen and wounded hundreds of others,

most of them about 5,000 US forces in this desert kingdom have been relocated and consolidated in two heavily guarded compounds: a vast unfinished air base near Kharij, about 70 miles southeast of Riyadh, and a tiny community of concrete villas named Eskin Village on the southeastern outskirts of the capital.

Inspecting both sites last Saturday, Defense Secretary William J. Perry declared them secure, although still missing many amenities.

"We're not there yet, but we're making enormous progress," Perry told hundreds of soldiers standing under sunny skies in Eskin Village's central square. "You can feel quite safe. I believe."

After being criticized for failing to do enough to clarify force protection policies and guard against the June attack,

Perry left no doubt about his priorities.

"We uprooted a lot of you and pulled you into this facility," he said. "We did it for one reason: To protect you. That is the number one requirement we have. All your commanders here, we've told them that is their number one task."

The Saudis built the village's 850 five-bedroom villas decades ago to house Bedouin, but the desert nomads preferred their tents, so the residential complex stood largely unused.

Lately, the Americans have been busy reinforcing the compound's perimeter with concrete barriers, concertina wire, flood lights and electronic sensor. A 400-foot buffer zone separates any occupied houses from the nearest highway. Entering the village

requires a zigzag weave around numerous barriers and passage through three separate check points.

Once inside, most military personnel rarely leave until their tours are finished. With recreational and entertainment facilities still only in the planning stages, soldiers said they spend their free time playing outdoor sports, reading and watching television.

The village houses up to 1,700 US military personnel, including the headquarters staff and support teams overseeing the US-led coalition effort to bar Iraqi military flights over southern Iraq. It also has become home for US security assistance groups assigned to Saudi forces.

Another 4,200 US airmen live at Prince Sultan Air Base near Kharij, farther south. The Pentagon has set aside

about \$150 million for the relocation of forces in Saudi Arabia. Perry told reporters he received a "strong commitment" from Saudi King Fahd at a pre-dawn meeting last Saturday to support the next phase of base and housing improvements, which US defense officials estimate will cost another \$150 million and hope the Saudis will pay.

US forces in Saudi Arabia remain at a high state of alert amid continued threats against them. Perry told reporters traveling with him.

Maj. Gen. Kurt Anderson, who leads Operation Southern Watch enforcing the "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq, said there have been periodic instances of suspicious "surveillance" activity around Eskin Village: people in passing cars taking video pictures of the compound or surveying

the village from across the highway.

Last week, Perry told reporters that information gathered by US and Saudi intelligence had blocked possible new terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia. While declining to discuss details, he said such information led to some arrests.

Saudi officials have said they are holding about 40 Saudi citizens in connection with the attack and have traced the terrorist action to a broad conspiracy that the Saudis say was backed by the government of Iran.

Perry told Fahd that he had been encouraged by the report on the investigation he received from FBI Director Louis J. Freeh, who visited Riyadh a week ago to review the case.

Hillary will rise above the bashing

A view from America

By Carrie Neile Moya
Star US correspondent

ONCE AGAIN much of the public has returned to Hillary-bashing, or did it ever stop? News reports cite statements that Hillary Rodham Clinton wants to return to the once ill-fated position of playing a role in initiating and implementing major policy regarding US citizenry. This time she has chosen the area of welfare. In the same reports, we are told that Republicans on the Hill are delighted at the prospect of having her as a target once more—the whipping boy (woman!) of the Clinton administration.

Some opinion editorialists have delighted in forecasting dire consequences for Hillary, the President, and the Democratic administration. Should she choose again to take a strong stand on issues of major importance in our country, it appears that many of us felt so much better when the first lady somewhat retreated into the more traditional mold of smiling and speaking supportively of her husband but remaining more or less silent on controversial issues. Further, it appears that her book *It Takes a Village* was considered to be fairly acceptable for a first lady to write, but certainly there were many dissenters on this issue also.

Recently I re-read Doris Kearney Goodwin's 1994 Pulitzer Prize winner *No Ordinary Time*, the lives of Franklin Delano and Eleanor Roosevelt. No matter whether

one hated or loved FDR, he was a great president. Any person who was elected by the citizenry on four consecutive occasions to be its leader must be considered to have been great, no matter of one's political leanings.

And if one did not already know prior to reading Goodwin's book, Eleanor was equally great—perhaps even greater in her own way—than one (the reader) certainly realizes this when going through these pages once again. Like FDR, Eleanor was vilified by masses of people, but she was a heroine to many more. She was diligent in her sincerity in doing what she knew in her heart and conscience was the right thing to do, regardless of the political pressure placed upon her husband and the Democratic party which she followed through with her ideals.

Eleanor Roosevelt was by no means a person who let criticism fall by the wayside, unfelt. Rather, she accepted the spite and malice that was hurled at her, rose above it, and continued to demand social reform.



dependence on various learned advisors.

It is almost open-mouthed striking how much the Clintons are like the Roosevelts. Especially is this true regarding the two first ladies. We have been told how Hillary has identified with Eleanor, how the former has had imaginary conventions with the latter to help her channel her talents in a positive manner as the first lady of this country. Naturally such psychic exposure as presented in the press has resulted in much guffawing and smirkingly implied cynicism on the part of Hillary's detractors.

But is the present-day first lady's meditation on this past first lady really any more than most of us experience when we consider figures we wish to emulate, be they ancestors or extraordinary citizens? Doesn't every successful person from time to time turn her or his mind to rule model figures and ask how this paragon would FDR have handled such-and-such

Popular novelist in China denounced as symbol of moral decay

By Steven Malson
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

BEIJING—The sweet-faced Wang Shuo has long cultivated an image as the bad boy of contemporary Chinese fiction. His stories star an unsavory cast of shady policemen, spies, grifters and womanizers. He spoofs the late Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong as a pitiless, demanding demigod, and mercilessly parodies the Beijing liberal literary elite.

His more than 20 best-sellers have sold nearly 10 million copies; a dozen of his books were turned into TV soap operas and films. He became the irreverent voice of a disillusioned generation.

Now, however, as the Chinese Communist Party wages a battle to raise the nation's level of "spiritual civilization," Wang's world has become a symbol of moral decay.

Over the summer, the government propaganda department ordered a halt to new printings of Wang's collected works. Since then, two of his movie projects were scrapped and his television scripts have been snatched into government censors.

"The propaganda department said it had received a lot of complaints from people who think my novels are low-class and coarse," Wang says.

"They said that the books don't make the right kind of impression on young people."

It's not his fault, he pleads. "How can I write moral novels," Wang says with a look of puzzlement. "I didn't find heroic people around me. ... How can I write about beautiful things? I have no reference point. I want to write about reality and I have to write about real life."

China's culture police disagree.

Earlier this year they banned a Wang screenplay called "Papa," about a troubled relationship between a rigid but impotent patriarch and his unruly teen-age son. After the son is hurt in a gang fight, his father takes him to a hospital emergency room that is littered with gruesomely disfigured people beaten up in drunken brawls. The authorities, Wang said, "felt I exaggerated a bit." But he adds that his hospital after midnight will be full of people injured in inebriated scuffles.

The Ministry of Culture over the summer also halted filming of "Living on the Edge," in which Wang told the story of an extramarital affair. It bore some resemblance in plot to "The Bridges of Madison County," which was widely popular here and was hailed in the semi-official media for emphasizing family responsibility.

The lovers didn't even kiss," Wang says of his film. "But (the censors) felt that popularizing an immoral relationship is immoral."

The tone of Wang Shuo's writing springs from his own experiences during China's age of disillusionment. His father, who boasted about fighting the Japanese during the war years, turned out to have worked for them as a policeman. And the 38-year-old Wang is part of the tail end of China's Cultural Revolution generation—too young to have been swept up in the early, angry idealism but old enough to remember many of the movement's more absurd aspects.

When the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966, Wang's parents were sent away and he was left at age 8 with an older brother. They ate at the community canteen, collected their parents' salaries and did their laundry.

Their experiences became the basis for Wang's novel and the recent movie "In the Heat of the Sun." Unlike the tortured "scar literature" published immediately after the Cultural Revolution, Wang writes about the fun kids had coming of age in a strange time, largely free from adult supervision.

Later, Wang's father pushed his unruly son into a brief stint in the navy. Afterward, Wang

Milosevic regime pulls plug on news coverage of protests

By Tracy Wilkinson
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia—The largest of Belgrade's independent news media were stopped abruptly last Thursday from reporting on massive protests against Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic as the regime appeared to be clamping down.

Despite the blow to opposition forces, tens of thousands of demonstrators filled downtown streets for the 11th day, demanding the removal of Milosevic and sustaining the most significant challenge to his authoritarian rule in five years.

Crowds seemed smaller than in previous days, and opposition leaders urged their followers to refrain from the violence that last Wednesday. Hundreds of police in riot gear stalked out the demonstrators' parade route, but no clashes were reported.

Two of Yugoslavia's handful of independent news outlets were unable to report on the latest events.

The staff of the independent daily newspaper *Blic*, the capital's largest, resigned en masse when they were ordered by their publisher to ignore the demonstrations.

And popular B-92 Radio, a principal source of anti-government news, was repeatedly jammed Thursday—usually during news shows and when opposition politicians took to the airwaves.

In this truth-starved country, most newspapers, radio stations and television are controlled by the Milosevic regime. By limiting mention of the protests, Milosevic apparently hopes to defuse and isolate the opposition, diplomats and Serbian analysts say.

"He wants to establish an Orwellian type of reality that only exists on state-controlled TV," said Zoran Djindjic, head of the opposition Democratic Party, one of three parties that form the Zajedno (Together) coalition spearheading the protests.

Now dubbed the "yellow revolution" because of the use of eggs to splatter government targets, the demonstrations have been escalating since Milosevic canceled victories by opposition parties in 17 November municipal elections.

The opposition maintains that it won in 15 of Serbia's 18 principal cities—including Belgrade.

Milosevic was once an international pariah because of his role in financing and inspiring brutal ethnic warfare in neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina. But more recently, his influence over the Bosnian Serbs made Milosevic the key to the West's efforts to end that war with the US-brokered Dayton, Ohio, peace accords.

Now Washington and European capitals are faced with the dilemma of having to condemn his unending process without jeopardizing the regional stability that Milosevic is seen to guarantee, analysts said.

Clamping on news media is a tried-and-true Milosevic technique. In February, he took over the only independent

television station, Studio-B, placing Socialist Party censors in strategic positions.

Protesters in the last week have targeted state-run media—offices of the Politika newspaper and Radio Television of Serbia, pillars of Milosevic's power—and not Parliament or federal office buildings.

Among newspapers, the tabloid *Blic* had emerged as a popular source for thousands of Yugoslavs.

Until last Thursday, *Blic* had published thorough daily reports on the demonstrations.

But on Thursday, an editorial signed by co-owner Petar Koelbel announced that the paper no longer would assist the opposition in "damaging the reputation" of Yugoslavia in the world.

Opposition parties boycotted Milosevic's attempt last Wednesday to renew the municipal elections.

The shift at *Blic* is significant because it was the single largest source of printed information.

Only two months old, its daily circulation of more than 300,000 already exceeded the largest state-run papers.

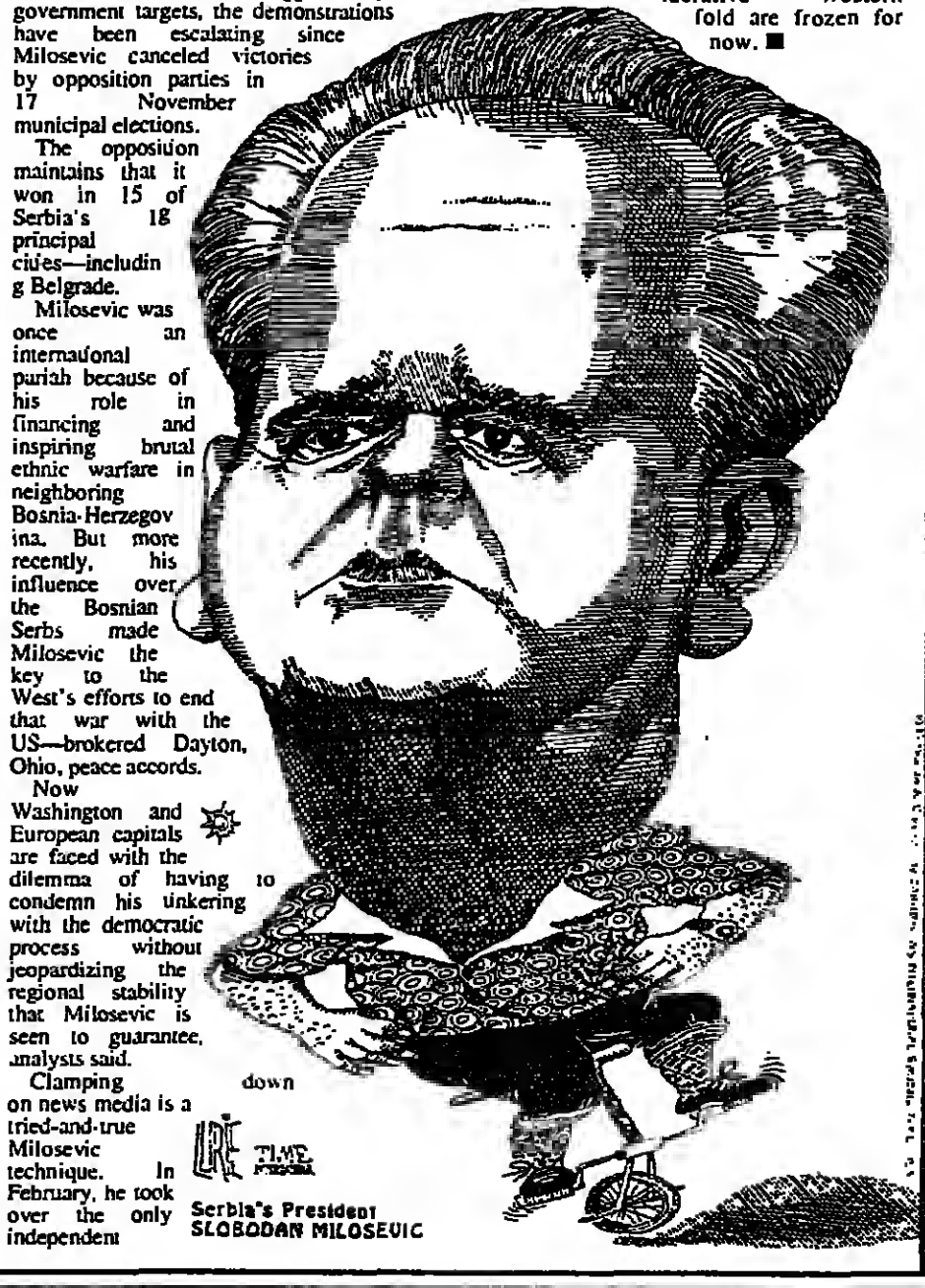
"It is outrageous," said a Western diplomat observing Thursday night's demonstrations. The government "can just turn off the source of information. Even when they're not stuffing the ballot box, they're cheating and lying to the public."

Meanwhile, at Radio B-92, the main electronic source for independent news, editors said their transmission signal has been jammed periodically for two days.

State television virtually has ignored the demonstrations and the international outcry over Milosevic's cancellation of opposition victories.

On Wednesday night, after protests turned violent, state television's nightly broadcast reported "street vandalism" but focused on what it said was Yugoslavia's successful pursuit to "rejoin" Europe.

In fact, the European Union and Washington have told Milosevic that his efforts to bring Yugoslavia back into the lucrative Western fold are frozen for now.



Adult adoptees search for Irish roots

By William D. Montalbano
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

DUBLIN, Ireland—Maggie Butler marvels at her mother's courage.

Imagine: Alone, frightened, a young unmarried woman stands before stern nuns, a priest, lawyers and a notary at a Dublin orphanage in 1952 and signs away her baby.

"I certify that I have handed over my daughter to custody, I surrender her completely to charge," the papers say. "I solemnly promise that I shall never interfere with her in any way in future." The woman signs, then vanishes.

Soon after, the Irish baby who will become an American named Maggie Butler is flown to the United States for adoption by a Roman Catholic family in New England.

Now Butler is back, in expectation and frustration, searching for her mother. The

quest has made her "the Irish national orphan," said Butler, who now lives in Dublin and is the most visible symbol of about 2,000 people who, as infants, were quietly shipped to the United States between 1949 and 1972.

"Many of these mothers have howled inside with the pain of it for the rest of their lives," Dublin social worker Norah Gibbons said.

Many of their children are now howling too against a system that seems to many of them to have been built on misguided faith, forlorn hope—and forgery.

In addition, tens of thousands of now-middle-aged Irish men and women were taken from their unwed mothers as babies to cover up their births, judged shameful by the moral standards of a thousand non-Catholic societies.

Like the Americans, the Irish adoptees are demanding answers to questions that leave modern Ireland uneasy.

"People are asking basic, disturbing questions: Why was my mother encouraged to put me up for adoption? Why did my country send me away?" said Gibbons, who works for the child welfare agency Barnardos.

Adoptees such as Brendan O'Connor, an Irishman who learned his mother's identity after she died, and Maggie Butler are proof that information is hard to acquire.

As Irish law is now interpreted, adults who were adopted as children have no right to specific birth information from the dozen children's aid societies that handled the adoptions, all but one of them run under the authority of the Catholic Church.

Many countries, including Britain, which sent thousands of children to Australia and Canada after World War II, accept a United Nations call to give adopted children full access to their birth information, Ireland does not.

The Irish government is embarrassed and sympathetic; but pending a ruling by the Supreme Court expected by year's end, any rights of adoptees to information remains outweighed by long-ago pledges to their mothers.

"Many now think that concern for the mother's confidentiality is a good excuse for covering up the nuns' sins. Is consent valid if a woman surrenders her child under constraint and in difficult economic circumstances?" asked Irish reporter Michael Milotte, who is writing a book critical of adoption practices.

To release specific information to inquiring children would be a breach of faith and contract, adoption agencies say.

But pressure is building for some sort of national registry that would allow mothers and their children to seek out one another if they wish.

"It used to be that nobody

talked about being adopted. Now groups are being set up all over the country, people saying, 'I am adopted! I want information,'" said Theresa Fennessey, a social worker in Tipperary who has successfully reunited children and their mothers.

Extraordinary things are happening.

Women in their 60s are lying to their husbands, inventing excuses to sneak away to rendezvous with secret children whose existence they can't publicly acknowledge decades later.

Others are refusing to meet their children.

"They say to me, 'I've been married to him for 30 years; I can't tell him now,'" Gibbons said. "And some women never married and live in small towns where they have local reputations as the 'good spinster.' How can they come forward now to publicly embrace a child no one ever knew they had?"

Among perhaps 40,000 out-of-wedlock children raised by adoptive parents in Ireland, an average of 110 babies a year went to the United States from 1948 to 1962, "hopefully to a better life, but at what cost in human suffering we may never know," Foreign Minister Dick Spring said.

In 1952 adoption was legalized in Ireland, but it was not until 1962 that domestic demand for babies to adopt began to catch up with the supply, and not until 1972 that welfare benefits became available to single mothers.

"Many of us have been moved by the stories that have been told about babies exported to the United States—some of them unwanted, some of them removed from their young and frightened mothers at the most vulnerable possible time in the life of those mothers," Spring said. "Some of those children have spent many years trying to find out why they were

abandoned, as they saw it."

Enter Maggie Butler, born in Dublin in 1951, exposed before age 1 and raised in New England by an Irish American family.

A psychotherapist, she returned from Maine to live in Ireland in 1993 and began looking in earnest for her mother.

Eventually, she found the nuns who arranged for her adoption. Reluctantly, they gave her sketchy information, saying that her mother had moved to England, where she apparently married a Scotsman named Bill in 1953. Her natural father, the nuns said without elaboration, was a graphic artist.

Butler ran into a dead end after discovering that the surname on her birth certificate was false.

"You were cut off from your name, from your history and from your country," she said. "You were sent into exile. You are supposed to be grateful for what was done for you. But that shouldn't negate the fact that you want to meet your mother."

Mothers who reluctantly surrendered their children in the 1950s were victims of an inflexible, still rural and often poor society in which 20 miles was far away and most people had neither car nor telephone. Contraception was largely unpracticed in the Ireland of the '50s, just as abortion is still illegal in the Ireland of the '90s.

Said social worker Fennessey: "If a girl got pregnant, she went to the local parish priest, and he sent her to an unmarried mother's home. She had her baby and it was taken; that was expected. Some women never came out. They stayed in the convent."

Women, many of them grateful for anonymity and a second chance, were advised never to tell anyone of their shame.

AROUND TOWN



Students visiting The Star

● A group of 25 7th-grade pupils from the Abd Al Hameed Sharaf School visited The Star last Saturday. They were accompanied by their teacher.

The students were briefed by the Managing Editor of The Star, Marwan Al Asmar, on the different stages of the newspaper goes through before being sent to the printers.

Also, another group from Ad Dur Al Manthour School visited The Star last Thursday accompanied by their teachers Ms Raghad Zammanoun and Ms Amani Al Turk. The students were between the 6th and 10th grades.



Students from Abd Al Hameed Sharaf School

Decoding riddles of existence

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

Imitable sculptures fight the impossible and break the monotony of the world. The figures stretch their limbs high towards eternal positions escaping the heaviness of earth. Once controlled by gravity, they now ride in unlimited spaces.

In his exhibition at the Baladna Art Gallery, the Syrian sculptor Mustafa Ali delves into the secrets of the human mind. Structures, beliefs and emotions are hidden in the raw bronze material while Ali, through his chisel, seeks to dig them out. "Whether mundane or majestic, the shapes I created are of great importance because they were once unknown to people," Ali says.

His human and animal figures, dug out of Bronze, express man's yearning for the utter most levels of spirituality. The sculptor's creative hands shaped the figures in a way that befit the kind of dream they are seeking to create. Tall, nimble and slim, the erected bodies are obsessed with one thing: Immortality. "The vagueness and unexpectedness of the world forced my figures to seek a place in the subconscious," Ali adds.

The fact that the bodies are slim does not mean they are weak. The power of Ali's statues stems from their pursuit of something which is beyond the tangible. The physical power is being marginalized and replaced by the spiritual. A critic once described these statues as "ghosts".

What proves the critic's assessment is the positioning of some statues which are suspended in mid-air with what seems only a thread to the base. Ali just broke the shackles that once restricted the movement of the figures and provided them with more space. Also he wants to "highlight spaces that no one can see unless they are put within the borders of the figures".

While figures attempt to escape, others indulge in their own world. A work titled *Memory* features that

kind of person who keeps thinking of the fate of the world. The first impression you get is that of a killing silence realized by the different postures of the human figures and the frames they are put in.

A box placed above the head of a figure is according to Ali representative of one's memory. "It is a journey through the subconscious that is seeking truth," says Ali.

Despite the fact that Ali's figures seek catharsis in space they are not completely detached from certain facts imposed upon them. The fact that humans lost heaven to come to earth pains him. This can be traced in such works about Adam and Eve being clung together either spiritually or physically.

"The relation between man and the earth he is living on is continuous," Ali maintains.

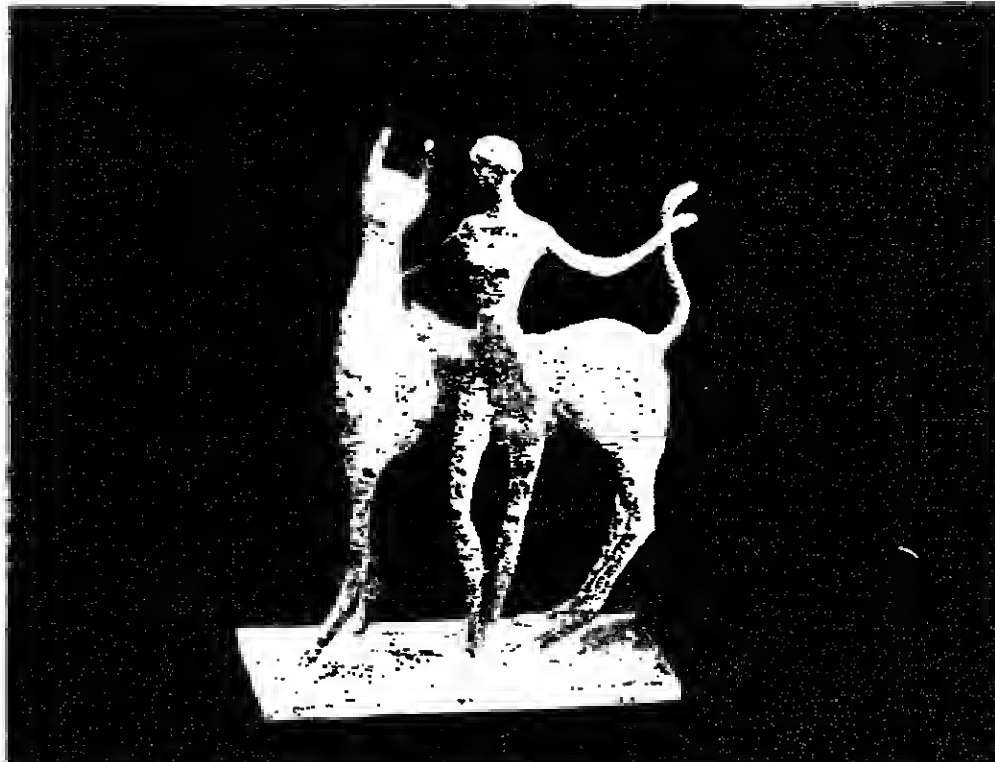
The quest for truth will continue to be a source of misery. People have different ways of looking for the essence of their lives. In the case of Ali's figures they are either dancing, swimming in space or indulging in erotic relations. It reveals the power of nature on them and how they are driven by basic instincts in their existence.

Ali says that "I presented turbulent and dreamy people who are not satisfied with life".

"Man thinks that he can decide his fate while he is still controlled by greater forces," he says.

As opposed to the *Memory* statue, we can think of the *The Knight* as representative of the Arab self-deceiving man. This man, as Ali puts it, resembles Donkey-shot who is imprisoned by his self-created illusions.

His *Ummu AL Qais* (a famous Arab pre-Islamic poet) is another example of the per-



son who takes pride in himself and then loses everything.

From this diversity we can see that Ali is able to comment on different social and cultural aspects. At times one work of his can combine all those meanings without sacrificing the main theme of the work.

Not only does Ali dig in Man's life but he also extends his curiosity to the wilderness. This is just as he borrowed the skinny figures from the bronze statues made by the Atraskians, here he picks up the Ibn Awa (a kind of dog) figure. This is the story of the Egyptian god Anubis who serves as the guard to the entrance of the gate to death.

Though the works express human universal feelings and desires, one can not separate them from the historical and social contexts in which they were created. No doubt the artist is influenced by

his social environment and the history of his land.

Ali says that he has been influenced by the ancient Middle Eastern civilizations, especially the Ogari. These historical eras are part of the collective memory of the people of this region.

"The past and the present, the old and the new, the subjective and the objective are woven into an amalgam of meanings and abstract cultural controversies," wrote Nazeer Naba'a, a Syrian art critic, summarizing the significance of Ali's works.

Ali was born in Syria in 1956 and graduated from the Faculty of Arts in Damascus in 1979. He studied in Italy since 1991 at the Accademia del Belli Arti in Carara. His works have been exhibited in many Arab and foreign countries. ■

The Exile

We are seven expellees, we are leaving for the exile

It is far, far away; that one guy, two or three of us would die

Come please and see us, It is a mile or more than even a mile

Come please, yes, it is serious, say hello and bid us some Good-bye

We are stopping at a mid-point and taking a breath for a while

Each time we're pacing, there is a mid-point in Zeno's Paradox

How could we cover this long distance being left in Zeno's eye

We then reached a jail at the end, it was like a central national,

Well known famous prison in an almost old Egyptian film, I

Had been watching once upon a time, Abu Za'bal it was called

SEVEN DARK BLUE DOORS in a concrete-built building were standing by "I can't live in such a place so far," I protested, "How could I?"

Asked Mr Hassan "Why couldn't he laugh, and spread a wide smile?" He grinned at me and answered, "How could live without a sweet pool of Water and so hideous under soft green bushes THE CROCODILE?"

Fawzi Shalabi

'Compars' Juxtaposing love and insecurity

By Star Staff Writer

In his award-winning film *Compars* (Extras), the Syrian director Nabeel Al Maleh leads us into untrodden paths of intellectuality. He deals with issues which were considered taboo for a long time. The film is shocking, something which Arab audiences have never been used to.

The film, shown at the Royal Cultural Center last Saturday, sheds light on a political imperative which effects the life of every Arab. By depicting the life of two lovers (Salem and Nada), acted by Bassam Kousa and Samar Sami respectively, whose relationship might be considered improper, *Compars* goes against the Arab status quo. It is an attack on old-fashioned beliefs which Arab culture still suffers from.

A widow becomes acquainted with a person who is depressed by the agonies of life. Salem is the victim of his family's poverty. Having been brought up in a small household with many brothers, he did not receive the proper care and attention.

A series of inferiority complexes grips him as he develops a relationship with the widow. He continues to feel that the relationship fails to give him the emotional satisfaction that he longs for.

The film goes on to describe the effect of



Samar Sami

the social problems on people's psychology.

The film shows how the couple live in a perpetual feeling of insecurity. They always think that they are being watched by people who don't want their affair to continue.

Not only do they feel afraid of the political instability and the lack of freedom that surrounds them but they are also aware that it is tradition that shackles their movement and threatens their love.

The whole movie is shot in the house of Salem's friend. Throughout many things happen which scare them. They believe that those who reject seeing them together are following them to the house. Before they arranged to

meet in the house, their life was sheltered on the streets. Now, they discover that they cannot feel safe even "within four walls".

To explain the title of the film, we should know that Salem, who is a law student, works as a subordinate actor. The film's title *Compars* is symbolic of people whose role is marginalized in life and who dream of becoming stars. Yet, such a dream remains unfulfilled.

Salem was given many subordinate roles in plays but could not act the role which fits his dream.

Though the film makes use of the stage technique in that the scenes are all filmed in one place, it has the rhythm that good films provide. We can always hear the singing of their blind neighbor playing the Oud, or the informer who just gets in the house to ask about the Oud Player. The fiancée of Salem's friend who comes in and talks nonsense adds another flavor. All these things coupled with Salem's anxiety and illusions render the scene dynamic.

As Salem's lover leaves him fearing that someone may notice her, the problem remains unsolved.

The film draws attention to many problems which lack solutions either because talking about them is forbidden or because of lack of awareness. ■

Refurbishment plan signed at the Inter.Continental Hotel

AMMAN (Star)—The Jordan Hotels and Tourism Corp., (JHTC), owners of the Jordan Inter.Continental Hotel, has signed an agreement with the Inter.Continental Hotels Corporation to embark on a refurbishment plan of the Inter.Con Jordan.

Mr Khalil Al Talhouni, chairman of JHTS and Mr Raymond Khalifeh, president of the Inter.Continental Hotels Corporation, Middle East and Africa signed a contract for continued management of the hotel last week. Mr Al Talhouni said the new agreement aims to improve the performance of the hotel and all its facilities. He added that the increasing number of hotels in Jordan and the ones which are still under construction require us to prepare ourselves for the new competition.

The refurbishment works have started before the signing and will last for two years. This includes adding a new 125-room building bringing the total number of rooms to 500.

A four-floor car park will be a part of the building. There will be a health club equipped with the latest facilities in health and sport services in addition to an

indoor swimming pool. The existing ballroom will be expanded to cater for an additional 400 people bringing its capacity to 1400 persons. A shopping mall with 26 shops will be annexed to the hotel.

The plan also includes the modernization of the current facilities. The previous Uqath restaurant will be converted into a Lebanese restaurant. The hotel will have a redesigned external facade. The modernization plan covers the old kitchens, lifts and rooms of the hotel.

The agreement includes a cut in the management fees from three percent of the gross revenue to two percent and a cut of the operating profits



(From L to R): Al Talhouni and Khalifeh sign agreement while Lucy Aslou of public relations looks on.

from 15 percent to 10 percent. The cost of the refurbishment plan ranges between JD15 million to JD 16 million. ■

AGENDA

Exhibitions
● Exhibition and Sale of lithographs, old postcards and photographs on Jerusalem. Chinese paintings, at Um El Kundum, right off the Airport highway on the way to the Arabian Horse Club, first left at the top of the hill. Friday 6 November from 11 am till 5 pm. Tel: 664805.

● Works by Marwan Kassab-Bachi at the Darat Al Funun, continues till 9 January.
● Graphics by Computer by Ismail Shammout at Muntada Shoman, continues till 24 December.
● Works by Rula Shukairi at the Darat Al Funun, continues till 4 January.

Films
● *Les Visiteurs* at Philadelphia Cinema. Today at 8:30 pm.
● *La Soif De L'Or* at Philadelphia Cinema. 6 December at 8:30 pm.
● *Andre Malraux* on La grande vie at French Cultural Center, 9 December at 8:30 pm.

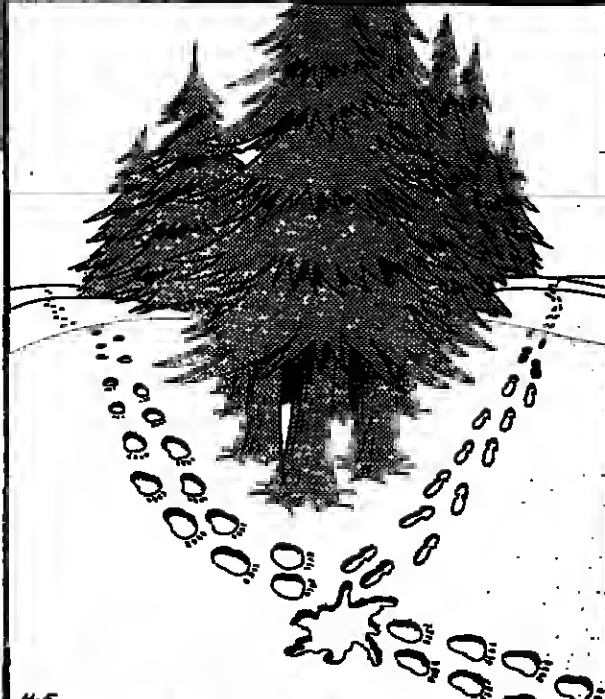
Lectures
● Kifah Al Habib talking about the art of Rula Shukairi and Fakhrelnissa Zeid at the Darat Al Funun, 9 December at 6:00 pm.

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Now watch your step, Osborne... The Squiggly Line people have an inherent distrust for all smoothliners."



DECEMBER
BOOK
El-Sherif
cars!

Well, that's not exactly
can't afford to buy a new
looking at used cars. He
bargain and buy him-
ed car. But so far he has
named of the likes of
ians actually made a
cars. Apparently, while
it's a booming market,
the fact that new cars are
the reach of most
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sing in the daily papers
are looking for really
air. The hurry is the
row cars take their own
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as well, with people buy-
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icles and drive away only

one Friday afternoon to see
the outskirts of Amman for
a car, but it was on class
was the age of men on
this vintage and they had
1977 Citroen model which
is selling for JD 1300. The
bargain. It had a 1900 cc
two fit, but apparently de-
gas filter, battery, engine,
looked like a piece of pie
and abuse from many
Four, five, seven
is worn out and out to be
old and abandoned. How
I said to myself. There's
horsepower, ready to go
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as hurried at first when
they marked a car that
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And, in the end, a little
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car sold nation.
arriving agents can still
startled engine. But the
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at the time. The per-
After all, 2000 cc en-
gine is a clean bill of health

their next best hope.
social club or some one
ever the club is a
cup of good luck.
tally, about the size of
election, organizations
person. I could tell you
about the merits of the
of men!

SIDE
GARY LARSON



DECEMBER 1996
A special section offering
fresh perspectives on
global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES
ON FIVE CONTINENTS



APPEARING IN: AMMAN • BANGKOK • BEIJING • BIRMINGHAM • BOMBAY • BUNTON • BUENOS AIRES • CAIRO • CANNES • CHONG KONG • JAKART • KARACHI • KUALA LUMPUR • LIMA • MEXICO CITY • MOSCOW • PANAMA CITY • QUITO • SAN JOSE • TAIPEI • TOKYO



Time for a career change: Romanians vent their displeasure on a member of the communist regime's security forces during a 1989 demonstration in Bucharest

Securitate finds its new mission less confusing

Enemies of the state focus on Romania's mineral wealth

By Silvia Brucan
DURING THE COLO WAR, espionage in Romania was inseparable from political control of the citizenry. The country's spooks and spies rationalized their work with a melange of patriotism and ideological commitment to communist principles—the true believers were actually ready to die for the cause. There was another side to the coin. Quite a few spies from communist countries turned out to be for sale if the CIA's price was right and the vision of glamorous Western living tempting enough. Keeping Romania's population in line while protecting the country from external threats resulted in contradictions that Romania's sinister Securitate found difficult to reconcile. As a target of their investigations following my resignation from the government, I had personal experience of the Securitate's ambivalence. On the one hand, in their capacity as dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's praetorian guard, the Securitate arrested and interrogated me because I wrote, distributed and arranged the broadcasting of the famous "Letter of Six." Addressed to Ceausescu and signed by six former communist dignitaries, the letter was aired through Radio Free Europe and The Voice of America. While this was going on, however, another part of the Securitate was trying to prove that I was in the pay of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and had written the letter to further its aims. To round out the confusion, when the group headed by General I. Diaconescu failed to prove that I was a CIA agent, they turned their attention to a visit to Moscow I made in November 1988 in the hopes of linking me to the KGB.

The dossier used by Diaconescu was full of transcripts recording my conversations with the British, French and US ambassadors. It turned out that there was a mole in the US embassy who, in the finest traditions of B-grade spy novels, had been recruited through the charms of an attractive Romanian brunette. Romania's new intelligence service, SRI, no longer carries the burden of policing the population's political allegiances. However, people's economic behavior—and that of nations in competition with Romania—is keeping SRI's agents busy. Also, the cat-and-mouse game with foreign espionage services has not died away completely. An example of this new emphasis on industrial and economic matters is the ASCOM case. ASCOM, a joint venture operating in the oil-rich independent republics that emerged after the break-up of the Soviet Union, signed a US\$40 million contract in September with the government of Turkmenistan. The contract involved the repair, maintenance and operation of 3,600 oil derricks and wells. To implement the contract, ASCOM subcontracted part of the work to the Romanian firm UPETROM and put an UPETROM engineer, Nicolae Tomescu, in charge of the whole project. Tomescu and two associates then stole documents from Romania's Institute of Oil Research and tried to smuggle them to ASCOM's headquarters in Kishinev. But Romanian customs, alerted by SRI, were able to arrest the associates as they tried to leave Bucharest by charter plane. Direct foreign investment in Romania sometimes brings with it foreign espionage aimed especially at classified data on the country's mineral resources. Identifying enterprises that can be taken over at below market cost

is another priority of foreign spies. In a recent case, former Mining Department under-secretary Stefan Kiraly was apprehended passing state secrets concerning mineral resources to a foreign company. That company used the information to sign contracts that were to Romania's disadvantage. In the opinion of SRI, Kiraly's actions would, in time, have led to foreign control of several important mineral deposits. Amidst the economic cases, there is still military counter-intelligence work to be done. Traian Perlog was re-

cently sentenced to eight years in prison after the SRI identified him as the architect of an espionage network aimed at Romania's defense establishment. Perlog was, according to SRI, recruited by a foreign agency and was well supplied with dollars to finance this network. In brief, the end of the Cold War has done little to chill the espionage industry. Silvia Brucan is The World Paper's associate editor for East Europe.

Spies and spooks now spy on business. That's the conventional wisdom. It sounds patriotic and relatively harmless—who cares if big corporations lose a few files or find one of their patents is worthless? It also obscures the less palatable truth that many of these agents are doing variations of their old, less savory jobs or have turned their skills to criminal ends

Despite witchhunt, Berlin still draws spies

Leopards change their spots but keep their claws

By Paul Holroyd
THRILLER-WRITER John Le Carré called Berlin "the eternal city of spies." Recently, Interior Senator Jörg Schönbohm dubbed unified Germany's capital "the city of a thousand" spies. Schönbohm, whose figure could well be a zero short, went on to observe that, "Even though the Bonn Government hasn't moved there yet, some nations are developing a rather excessive 'news service' presence." Nobody was left in doubt as to what he was alluding to. Topping the list of suspects are the Russians, Iranians and North Koreans. The media's ferrets say Russia's main targets are the stock market, the military, Deutsche Telekom and big computer companies, while the Iranians shadow representatives of their home-front enemies and the North Koreans busy themselves courting those of their southern brothers sympathetic to the idea of a reunion under the Red Star flag. When the Berlin Wall came down the traditional spies on both sides of the Cold War began to melt away. West German operatives, such as they were, eased quietly into civilian life. In the East, however, the collapse of the mighty Ministry

for State Security—the Stasi—left behind agents by the legion; in 1989, it had an estimated 97,000 full-time members. But these regulars were the tip of the iceberg. The Stasi's strength was in its stringers—175,000 of them, according to Jörn Mothes of the Provincial Inquiry into Stasi Activities in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern—10 percent of whom were students as young as 15 years old. Recruited willingly or otherwise, these "unofficial co-workers" not only spied on everybody everywhere, but were energetically pressed into projects ranging from rabble-rousing to betrayal, sabotage to terrorism. Because of the vast numbers involved, a reunited Germany will be occupying itself with unmasking former "spooks" for a very long time. Spot-the-Stasi has become something of a national obsession. Hardly a week passes without the unmasking of a noteworthy citizen; one day a teacher, another day a folk singer; here a company director, there a mayor. As government investigators systematically thumb their way through the mountain of Stasi's top-secret files, prominent names keep hitting the headlines. The fact

► LEOPARD'S SPOTS PAGE 2

The US cast a long shadow over Asian intelligence agencies Filipino agents sail uncharted waters

By Manny Mogato
UNLIKE THEIR COUNTERPARTS in the West, intelligence agencies in Southeast Asia are just starting to explore the possibilities afforded by the climate of global disorder. Operating largely in the shadows of the major Cold War protagonists, spooks in this part of the world have suddenly been thrust to the forefront and asked to sail uncharted waters. Used to dealing mainly with parochial political concerns, intelligence agencies are now being directed towards significant international political and economic developments. The experience of the Philippines is a good illustration of this trend. After they kicked the US out of its two huge military bases, the Philippine government was forced to rely on its own meager security and intelligence forces. After sheltering comfortably under the US security umbrella for over four decades, these forces were particularly ill-equipped to deal with external matters. Prior to 1992, when the US quit the Subic Bay naval base, the Philippine military was trained and equipped for domestic conflicts and "pacification" campaigns. It waged two such campaigns against the Muslim secessionist

movement in the south and the communist insurgents, part of its role as defender of unpopular regimes that were supported by the US. In these circumstances, the intelligence services in the Philippines—both civilian and military—were mainly involved in domestic, socio-political information gathering. They also played an active role in silencing political opposition and quashing all forms of dissent. Even when operating outside the Philippines, agents usually found themselves tailing those labeled "enemies of the state." The real intelligence work was left to the US which, under the terms of a 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, willingly supplied self-serving data and reports during quarterly exchanges. However, with communism's collapse and the departure of the US "we have actually undergone some kind of rebirth," says one senior military intelligence official. "If, after the Cold War,

our Western counterparts were too busy searching for a new enemy to confront, we had the opposite problem; we faced the enormous task of finding out what is out there. We're not new to this [intelligence] game, but we're total strangers to the changing playing field." Agents operating outside the Philippines were immediately re-oriented and asked to gather information that will further the state's broader goals. This includes material "that will enhance the nation's trade and

economic prospects, its access to markets and technologies and its transformation into a newly industrialized country by the end of this century." According to one retired general who now works for a civilian intelligence agency, "These are not essentially new tasks. Most agencies have been doing these things for a long, long time. We have been doing these things before but, now, we're putting more emphasis on them." Under a presidential directive—one of the first issued by Fidel Ramos after he was elected to office four years ago—the entire intelligence establishment was reorganized, redirected and revitalized. It is still a sprawling, complex establishment; for instance, the departments of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Culture and Sports, Labor and Employment and Education all control some intelligence funds. Collectively, the country's official budget for intelligence activities is about 1 billion pesos (US\$250 million). Seasoned intelligence operatives—of which there are about 5,000—say that their old skills apply to the new environment, but must be applied with greater sophistication and creativity. "Remember,"

► UNCHARTED PAGE 2



It's all in the trenchcoat

Same plumage does not make spies and journalists birds of a feather

By Crocker Snow Jr.

IF YOU WANT all the mystery and romance of being an international intelligence agent with none of the boredom—and none of the alleged danger—just register yourself as a foreign correspondent.

This ink-stained wretch and hundreds of other men and women with a bursting passport full of visa stamps to exotic places and lots of clippings to show for our efforts have been, at odd moments, variously challenged, accused and mistaken for intelligence agents in journalism drag. Our connections, the people we know and places we go contribute to this. The compulsiveness of our have-laptop-will-travel mentality contributes to the public's assumption of a hidden agenda.

In fact, the genuine foreign correspondent and the intelligence operative are not all that different in practice and purpose. Beyond the Humphrey Bogart trenchcoat look they share, both are in the business of gathering fresh data, cultivating contacts and processing information—often from unwilling, uncooperative sources. Each has to have a nose for key events and the real players, an ability to separate the wheat from the chaff and recognize disinformation for what it is.

Still, there are some fundamental differences. Those in the media report to an editor for the purpose of informing the public. The more exposure the better. On the other hand a spy, we are told, reports to his or her handlers. Their reports are for very private consumption. One report contributes to the public interest, one fuels politically determined policy.

Overlap inevitably occurs. During the height of the Cold War, representatives from TASS and other Eastern European

news agencies in key international capitals like London, Washington and Tokyo were widely known to be—and sometimes openly acknowledged they were—on the payrolls of their countries' intelligence agencies. Their contacts and conclusions were doubtless stamped "Top Secret" almost as often as they appeared in print under a byline.

The Western media is not immune either. A lot of self-styled missionaries for freedom of speech and the independence of the

press have been exposed as players of both the witting and unwitting kind. During the early 1970s, when the late William Colby was appointed to head a CIA adrift in a sea of Congressional hearings about its "rogue elephant" style of operations, he testified that a dozen newsmen were on the agency's payroll.

That news came as no great surprise, but the "dirty dozen"—who were not named—tainted the collective reputations of several thousand practicing and "above board" American foreign correspondents. A resident correspondent in Japan at the time, this diarist endured arched looks of the "and-when-did-you-stop-beating-your-wife" variety from suddenly suspicious sources. Rebuttal was viewed through the prism of "he who doth protest too much."

Our nest was not the only one soiled by government money attached to covert goals.

During another round of official mea culpas, it emerged that a syndicate for international writers—long

defunct—had been subsidized with CIA funds. Many top Third World journalists, including two charter members of *The World Paper's* original editorial board, Sri Lanka's Tarzie Vittachi and Indonesia's Mochtar Lubis, learned that they had un-

wrong kind of animal can be acutely embarrassing.

It happened during the early years of *The World Paper*. First, there was a phone call I received from a United Press International reporter in December 1979. He'd been tipped off with the fanciful idea that I was spending my spare time acting as a covert go-between for Massachusetts' Senator Edward Kennedy and Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, with whom the Senator wanted a meeting. Why didn't I think of that?

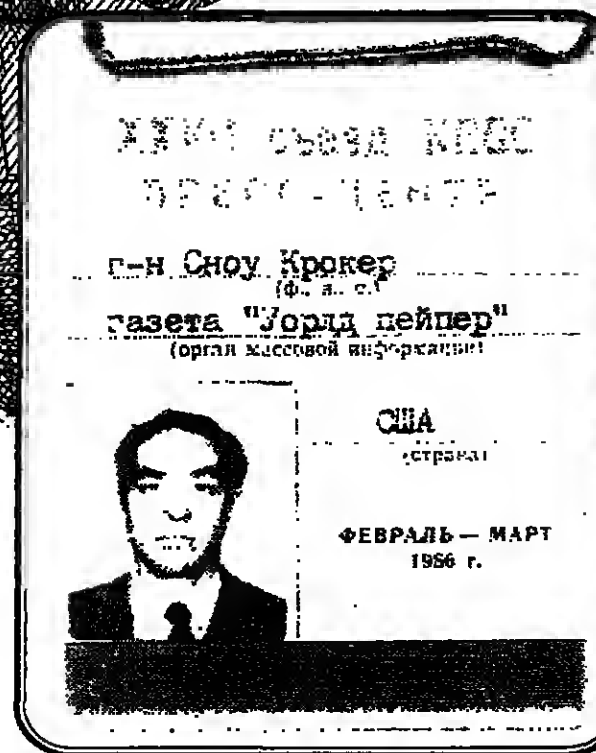
A few years later, a "smart Alec" remark to a reporter from a Boston newspaper came back to haunt me. Addressing suspicions that getting pluralistic perspectives on global topics from native writers wasn't the only topic on our agenda, I said that, "We were accused of being everything from the CIA to ITT to KGB. They felt there had to be more there than just a newspaper."

A decade or so later, I was horrified to find that a short item about *The World Paper* in *Fortune* magazine included a passage stating that its editor-in-chief admitted he was suspected of working for the CIA or KGB. The writer had obviously gone back through the old clippings, chosen to overlook the tongue-in-cheek context and spare ITT any corporate blushes, and committed to paper another chapter in the confused relationship between journalism and spying.

It goes with the territory. ☐

CROCKER SNOW JR. IS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *The World Paper*.

WORLDDIARY



wittingly been paid with money given to further a First World agenda.

While the case can be made that journalists and spies belong in the same barnyard, both being somewhat self-righteous and Druid-like in their approach to life, being confused for the

LEOPARD'S SPOTS

Continued from page 1

that cases have been brought against 2,400 stringers who were operating on the western side of the Berlin Wall is indicative of the dragnet's scope. The best guess for the total number once operating in West Germany: around 15,000.

Just to be under investigation often results in ignominy and unemployment. Professional soldiers exposed as ex-official Stasi employees are instantly dismissed from the Bundeswehr. Across the entire job spectrum, thousands have suddenly found themselves out on the street—and black listed.

Examples are numerous.

► Press reports cast a shadow on a star

conductor, Heinz Fricke, by claiming he had fallen foul of the German State Opera's in-house Stasi screening. The 69-year-old, much-traveled maestro was fingered as a Stasi stringer—code-named "Carlos"—during his 30 years as the opera's general music director. Vehemently denying the accusation, an angry Fricke packed his baton and left. "Separation by mutual agreement," it was called in the newspapers. He moved to the US and in 1994 took the post of music director for the Washington Opera.

► Heads rolled at the Charité Hospital in former East Berlin where 56 cases came under the spotlight, with accusations of corruption, misuse of position and "unjustified furtherance of career." Five hospital staffers faced immediate dismissal and 10 the termination of their contracts.

► Professor Hans-Günter Kirmse, 48, a lecturer on autogenic training attached to a state medical aid organization in Potsdam, is alleged to have been a Stasi major specializing in youth psychology. Kirmse is adamant it's a trumped up charge. His employer says that if the allegations are true, he's out.

► Rudolph Maiwald, Mayor of Königstein, in the province of Sachsen, recently saw his 1994 election annulled as a result of his 10-year link

with the German Democratic Republic's security machine.

Not all employers reach for the ax. When the Berlin representative of the Hamburgische Landesbank, Axel Poesz, was exposed as a one-time Stasi stringer code-named "Spotted Woodpecker," the bank shrugged it off. Pointing out that since Federal prosecutors had closed their inquiry, the bank's management said they saw no reason to show him the door.

Poesz, says the bank, got his job in 1990 because of his excellent knowledge of the GDR's economic structure and his experience in foreign trade. Stasi documents revealed Poesz was involved in several affairs, including arms deals in which he helped Lebanese business partners get hold of weapons such as the Soviet Sam

8 anti-aircraft missile.

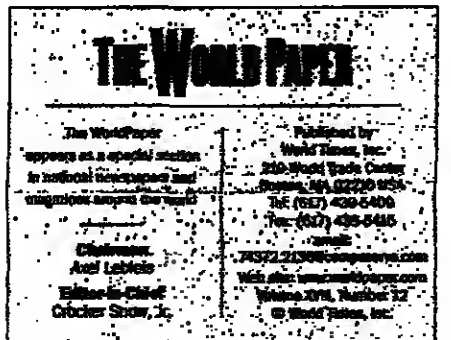
The rigorous firing of Stasi suspects appears to have slackened off a little of late. Germany's governing Christian Democrats have been winning under increasing criticism that they have no uniform and fair system for unmasking spies and coming to terms with the former

6,000 bags of thin paper strips are piled up in a Nuremberg office, the fruits of the Stasi's feverish shredding-machine labors during the last days of the regime. 50 bags' worth of records have already been painstakingly glued together

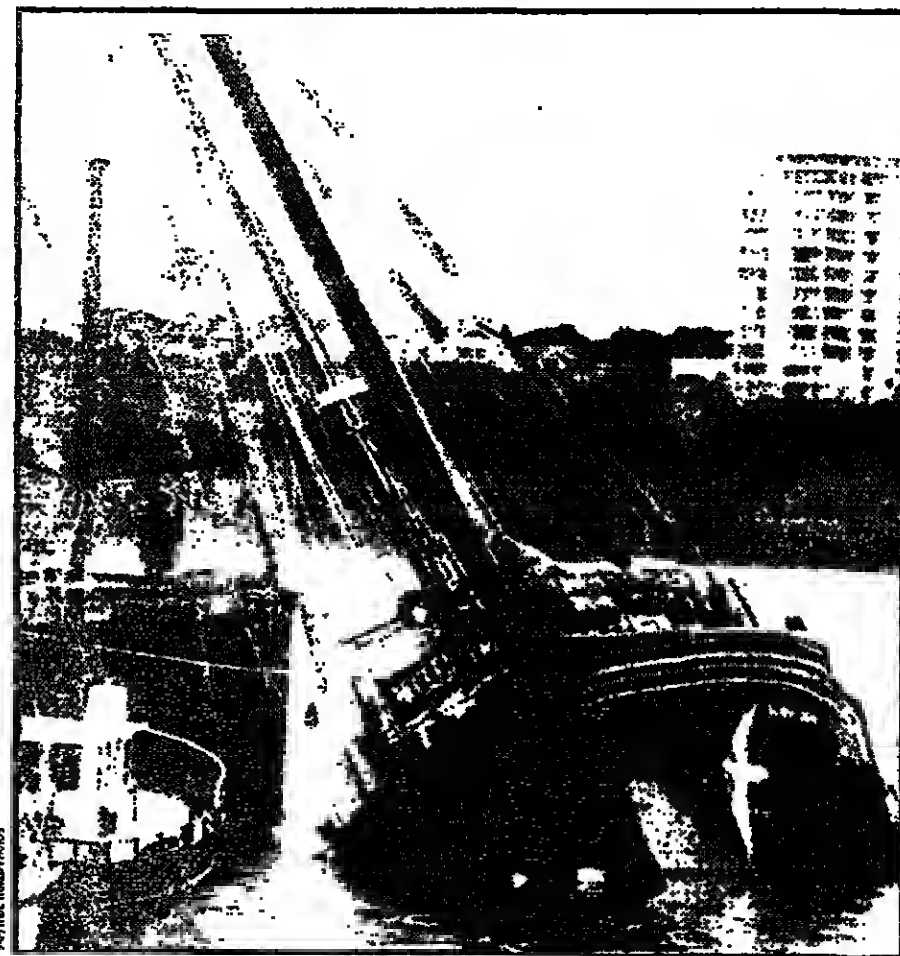
East Germany's past.

Despite these hesitations, 6,000 bags of thin paper strips are piled up in a Nuremberg office, the fruits of the Stasi's feverish shredding-machine labors during the last days of the regime. Some 50 bags' worth of stripped records have already been painstakingly glued together. It's a safe bet a lot more heads are destined for the block. ☐

PAUL HOLROYD IS A BERLIN-BASED FREE-LANCE JOURNALIST.



An NGO gets the dagger



ON JULY 10, 1985 the environmental group Greenpeace was introduced into the deadly game that, until then, only nations played.

Their vessel *Rainbow Warrior* was snugly docked in New Zealand's Auckland harbor following a voyage to protest a French nuclear test site at Moruroa Atoll in the South Pacific. The French, ever concerned about their nuclear muscle, dispatched two frogmen to plant plastic explosives on the boat. The explosions killed one Greenpeace photographer, Fernando Pereira, and sank the ship.

A couple of months later, on September 19, Defense Minister Charles Hernu resigned. In November the two French agents went on trial in an Auckland court and plead guilty to charges of manslaughter and willful damage.

In some ways, this was a glimpse into the future. NGOs are becoming real players on the global scene. Intelligence agencies are paying attention to them and trying, sometimes violently, to influence the course they chart.

—By Omar Younes

UNCHARTED

Continued from page 1

says one, "we're no longer dealing with rural revolutionaries. Now we're trying to squeeze information from business executives, scientists, engineers and people who are not exactly fomenting trouble in our backyard."

Gone also is the relative predictability of the Cold War alliances and missions. "Now we have to worry about a lot of things," says another operative. "We have to track down international terrorists, international drug cartels and even petty criminals. We are not just on the lookout for potential troublemakers—we are also collecting, evaluating and interpreting information on the

various obstacles to, and opportunities for, attaining national goals."

Other states within the ASEAN alliance are moving in the same direction. Singapore is regarded as being in a class of its own among the seven-member organization, and is one of the countries the Philippines shares intelligence with on an annual basis.

Singapore's advantage stems from an extensive network of overseas Chinese, many of whom have influence on the economies of other ASEAN countries. That, and the cash that the tiny island republic has to spend on intelligence. Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia are also taking advantage of their growing prosperity to enhance their intelligence capabilities.

The Philippines is sharing some of the benefits of this increased spending. Uncertainty about the US role in the Pacific has prompted wider cooperation among ASEAN states. Intelligence sharing now takes place on a regular basis, and the Philippines reaches as far afield as Pakistan and South Korea for information.

To date, however, the country is relying on a reservoir of goodwill, since the information generated by its intelligence establishment is not of the quality provided by ASEAN countries with deeper pockets. ☐

MANNY MUGATO WRITES FOR THE JAPANESE DAILY NEWSPAPER *Asahi Shimbun* FROM ITS MANILA BUREAU.



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Video pleasures under one dome

THE PLEASURE Dome is the first video-shop which rents and sells original tapes in Jordan. It has a video library of about three hundred titles with 100 titles released every month.

The clients are always updated on the latest releases through a monthly newsletter issued by the store. Mr. Murad Bushnaq, the director, said that the Pleasure Dome is the first of its kind in Jordan. It presents the audience with "unbeatable high picture quality and Hi-Fi stereo sound that makes up a totally different viewing experience."

This is in addition to the hundreds of CDs one can find at the shop. Bushnaq added that the shop is run according to the international IPR Laws.

"We can not beat piracy unless we convince people with quality which the pirates can not offer to their clients."



Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149): Twister
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149): Barb Wire
- Plaza (Tel: 699238): The Rock
- Concord I (Tel: 677420): Independence Day
- Concord II (Tel: 677420): Up Close & Personal

Celebs...



● James Bond has been turned through the screen into a legendary character who seeks justice and beats evil. In the picture we can see the three Bonds Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton and the current one Pierce Brosnan. They gathered at the memorial service for the bond film producer Cubby Broccoli.

The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 7-13 December

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:05—Adventures of Mickey and Donald
- 2:30—Circus
- 3:00—French Programs
- 4:00—Gillette (sports)
- 4:30—Chris Cross
- 5:00—News Flash
- 5:02—Futures (Educational)
- 5:15—Blue Heelers
- 6:00—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Something Wilder
- 8:00—Gardens of The World (Doc)
- 8:30—Prism
- 9:10—Superman-Lois and Clark
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:15—Best Seller
- 11:15—Feature Film: Burn Starring Mario Brando & Evanston Marquez

MONDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:05—The Muppet Show
- 2:30—Dad's Army
- 3:00—Nature's Inventions (Doc)
- 4:30—Hey Dad
- 5:00—News Flash
- 5:02—Destiny Ridge
- 5:30—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Rosanne
- 8:00—Disaster Chronicles (Doc)
- 8:30—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
- 9:10—The Lazarus Man
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:15—Best Seller- Family Pictures
- 11:15—The Knuck (Police Drama)

TUESDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:05—Budgie (Cartoon)
- 2:40—1 Love Lucy
- 3:00—French Programs
- 4:00—At The Zoo
- 4:30—Documentary
- 5:00—News Flash
- 5:02—Fun with Physics
- 5:15—They Come From Out-



NBA games, Wednesday at 9:10 pm

- 6:00—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Murphy Brown
- 8:00—Magazine 01
- 8:30—Encounter
- 9:10—Lost Civilizations
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:15—China Beach
- 11:15—Mission Impossible
- 12:00—Are You Being Served

WEDNESDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:05—The Muppet Show
- 2:30—Circus
- 3:00—French Programs
- 4:00—Earth Revealed (Doc)
- 4:30—Blizzard Island
- 5:00—News Flash
- 5:02—The Adventurers + Kelly
- 6:00—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Bakersfield
- 8:00—Super Stars of Action
- 9:10—NBA
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:15—Bugs (Drama)

FRIDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran

- 2:05—People (Long Cartoon)
- 3:00—French Programs
- 4:00—The Crystal Maze
- 5:00—News Flash
- 5:02—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Blossom
- 8:00—Discover Magazine (Doc)
- 8:30—V.R.S. The Virtual Reality (science Fiction)
- 9:10—Hunter
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:25—Feature Film: Awake to Danger
- 12:00—Family Matters

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

- 3:00—Documentaire La France aux 1000 villages
- 3:30—Emission jeunesse Fête des bêtes
- 6:00—Série Jack
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine Ziva

DIMANCHE

- 3:00—Emission jeunesse Cajo
- 3:30—Divertissement Week-ends spéciaux
- 6:00—Magazine Faut pas rêver
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine Sports et musique

LUNDI

- 3:00—Variétés L'Intégrale Stéphane Eicher
- 3:30—Documentaire Travelling gourmet
- 6:00—Magazine Cassiopee
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine Cinq sur cinq

Programs are subject to change by JTV

Video releases

"CHAIN REACTION" (Fox, R) Even if he isn't exactly the person who might have been pictured as the one to determine how to convert water into usable fuel, Keanu Reeves has precisely that role in this action tale, as he and Rachel Weisz play the discoverers of that breakthrough... which some people don't want to become public knowledge. Morgan Freeman appears as one of the mystery men. ** (PG-13: P, V)

"MATILDA" (Columbia/TriStar, R) An adaptation of a popular and somewhat dark children's story, this Danny DeVito-directed fantasy casts Mara Wilson ("Mrs. Doubtfire") as a youngster with truly magical abilities. She ultimately decides to use those to seek clever forms of revenge on those she perceives to be her oppressors; DeVito and his wife Rhea Perlman also have major roles in the tale. ** (PG: P, V)

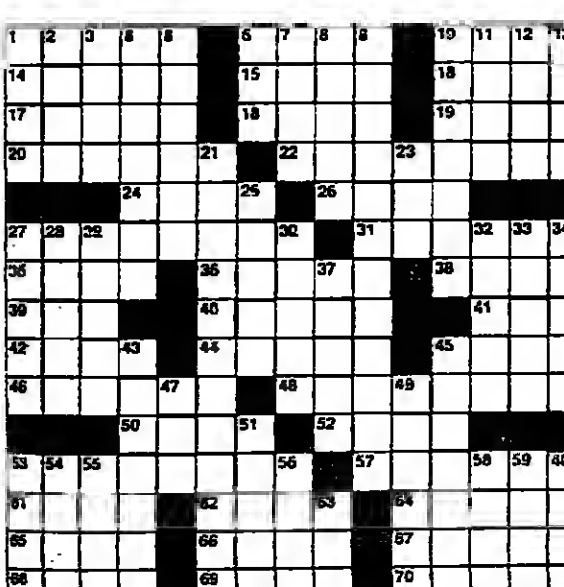
COMING SOON: "A FAMILY THING" (MGM/UA, Dec. 23): Robert Duvall and James Earl Jones play men of vastly different backgrounds who are surprised to find the link between them. (PG-13)

"THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU" (New Line, Dec. 24): Marlon Brando plays the scientist whose genetic experiments yield bizarre results; Val Kilmer also appears. (PG-13)

"A TIME TO KILL" (Warner, Dec. 30): The John Grisham story stars Matthew McConaughey as a lawyer on a controversial Southern case; Sandra Bullock also appears. (R)

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- ACROSS
- 1 Divans
 - 8 Site of Basra
 - 10 Take the — (verb)
 - 14 Unconcealed
 - 15 Island together
 - 16 Wickedness
 - 17 Flow man
 - 18 Diva Te
 - 19 Kanawa
 - 20 Deloit
 - 21 English
 - 22 Rubbish
 - 23 Striding
 - 24 Small drinks
 - 25 One of a pair
 - 26 Instrument
 - 31 Patrial Hale
 - 35 Crude
 - 36 — culture
- DOWN
- 38 First-class
 - 39 "But — on forever"
 - 40 Attorney —
 - 41 Perceive
 - 42 Fasting
 - 43 season
 - 44 Actress Shine
 - 45 Peddle
 - 46 Plant
 - 47 disease
 - 48 Flea
 - 49 Composer Khachaturian
 - 52 Adolescent
 - 53 Striving
 - 54 Potpourri
 - 55 Misnomers
 - 56 — la Paix
 - 58 Son of Jacob
 - 59 Precious wood
 - 60 Banks
 - 61 Poor grades
 - 62 — intrust (leave humbly)
 - 63 Youngster
 - 64 Daring tool
 - 65 Hardhearted
 - 66 Val material
 - 67 Biblical prophet
 - 68 Regarding, old style
 - 69 Decadent
 - 70 Spoil
 - 71 Sledge
 - 72 Take a risk
 - 73 Opening
 - 74 Brought up
 - 75 Long distance
 - 76 Riches
 - 77 To chatter
 - 78 Not on tap
 - 79 Applaud
 - 80 Marguere
 - 81 Singer Adams
 - 82 Forest creature
 - 83 Highest level

—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Blaek

Weekly Tip: Changes and confusion reign, so travel carefully.

Aries (March 21-April 19). Take your team on the road. If that's not possible, at least go for a long bike or snowmobile ride.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Get in your application for a promotion. If that deadline's past, submit job applications or resumes to the competition.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). You won't fare well in a direct competition. The other side has too much ammunition. Compromise and work out a partnership agreement instead.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). There's too much work. Enroll a partner to help you with it and you may get it all done. That's important, because you'll want to go shopping later.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). You could fall in love hard. You never like to do things half-way, and this is no exception. Get your wits about you — there's work to be done.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Are you moving, or what? If you're not, maybe you should. That's the only way you'll get any peace and quiet. Your love life could take a definite turn for the better.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll find it very easy to pick up new material, especially foreign languages. Hang around with a native speaker for best results.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Count your money and figure out your budget. If you don't have enough, sell your outgrown stuff. Get any work out of the way.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You are awesome. Start whatever you've been thinking about, including a change in your life's direction.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Finish up everything on all of your lists, even if you have to pull an all-nighter. Follow your instincts — they'll be excellent.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll have too many invitations. A team project will go very well. You'll be reminded of every little thing you've forgotten to do.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). You should be in for a good show. Most of your supervisors will be in a festive mood. Get together with your buddies and make plans for the future.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: You are hot! Stop doing the stuff that doesn't work and start becoming the person you've always wanted to be.

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Bridge

Remove the Restriction
By Omar Sharif and Tannah Hirsch

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

- NORTH
- AK4
 - 964
 - AQ10
 - AQ74
- WEST
- 10985
 - KJ
 - 9
 - J96532
- EAST
- QJ63
 - 1052
 - 7652
 - K8
- SOUTH
- 72
 - AQ873
 - K843
 - 10

The bidding:
North East South West
1♣ Pass 1♥ Pass
2NT Pass 3♣ Pass
3♥ Pass 4♠ Pass
4♠ Pass 5♠ Pass
5♠ Pass 6♥ Pass

Opening lead: Five of ♠.
There are many fascinating suit combinations that can be played differently. Consider the case where you are missing K J 10 x x in the trump suit. You elect to take a deep

finesse and lose to the jack or ten. Since your right-hand opponent is twice as likely to hold K J or K 10 as specifically J 10, it is not unreasonable to put up the ace on the next round. But the defense can have a say in matters, as this hand illustrates.

North-South were just a pip or two away from an excellent slam, reached via a cue-bidding sequence. As it was, all declarer had to do was limit the trump losers to one to get home.

West led a low club, taken by dummy's ace. At trick two, the nine of hearts was run, West winning the jack. West persisted with a club, ruffed in the closed hand. Declarer crossed to the king of spades and led a low heart. Without a moment's hesitation, East inserted the ten.

Whatever thought declarer might have had about snaring a now-bare monarch vanished. Assuming the ten was an honest card, East would have to hold the king of hearts as well for the slam to succeed. So declarer took the percentage play of finessing the queen of hearts — down one.

We, too, would have fallen for East's falsecard. A up of the hat to East for producing the ten of trumps on the second round without a flicker. Sparkling defense that deserved a just reward.

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TRUE! By Daryl Cagle

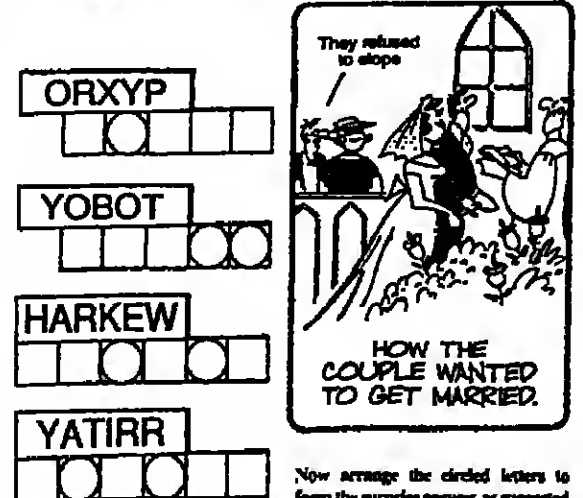


Since 1985, urban Los Angeles are residents were paid \$77 million in government farm subsidies.

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Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: THE " " " " " "

Answer: How the couple wanted to get married — THE "WIFE" "HUSBAND" "MARRIAGE" "PARTNER"

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Words of Wisdom

It's a terrible thing to become older without becoming wiser.

Popular opinion is powerful, but it is not always right.

That which grows slowly will endure long.

Jealousy always justifies its actions.

It is easier to wrap ourselves in dozens of virtues than it is to admit to a single fault.

A cynical society is a gullible one; people who believe in nothing are apt to believe in anything at all.

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

M. Netanyahu «embarrasse» la Jordanie

Le ministre jordanien de l'Information Marwan Mouasher (notre photo) a critiqué lundi une déclaration du Premier ministre israélien Benjamin Netanyahu pour qui la vallée du Jourdain en Cisjordanie «sera une partie intégrale d'Israël quelque soit le règlement définitif avec les Palestiniens».

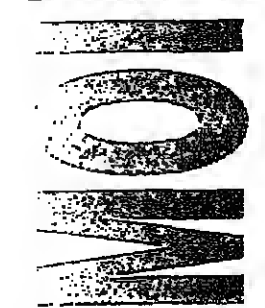
«Notre position est claire et consiste à dire que tous les territoires occupés doivent revenir sous la souveraineté palestinienne», a déclaré à la presse le ministre jordanien.

M. Mouasher a également dénoncé la relance de la politique israélienne de colonisation, estimant qu'elle était de «nature à entraver la poursuite du processus de paix».

La veille, le premier ministre jordanien Abdallah Karim Kabariti accusait, dans une interview accordée au quotidien israélien Maariv, Benjamin Netanyahu de faire le contraire de ce qu'il dit. «Il dit une chose positive, et sur le terrain, c'est autre chose, de négatif, qui se produit», a-t-il dit. «Nous voulons croire en lui et nous lui avons accordé tout le crédit, convaincus qu'il fallait lui laisser le temps de s'organiser. Mais le temps passant, nous sommes très frustrés et embarrassés», a déclaré le Premier ministre jordanien, espérant que les négociations entre l'Etat hébreu et les Arabes ne connaissent actuellement qu'un simple arrêt temporaire avant un nouvel élan.



SELON



Quand l'opposant politique Leith Chbeilat a été arrêté l'année dernière, une journaliste égyptienne a décrit cet acte comme une atrocité. Déplorant alors la marge restreinte de liberté d'expression dont bénéficiait la Jordanie.

Il n'est pas question de discuter aujourd'hui du bien-fondé de la décision d'arrêter Leith Chbeilat pour crime de lèse-majesté. Il est plus important de réfléchir aux conséquences de sa libération décidée, voilà trois semaines par décret royal et de ses répercussions au niveau des droits de l'homme.

La semaine dernière, une réception était organisée en l'honneur de Leith Chbeilat qui occupe toujours les fonctions de président du syndicat des ingénieurs. La plupart des opposants politiques jordaniens étaient présents et ont prononcé des discours critiquant ouvertement la politique du gouvernement actuel et des gouvernements précédents.

Si on souhaite estimer la marge de liberté dont jouit l'opposition dans ce pays, on constate que malgré tout, le gouvernement se montre tolérant et lui laisse une grande liberté d'expression. Comment peut-on donc expliquer les attaques à répétition de certains députés, comme Toujan Faygal ou les représentants islamistes, qui ne cessent de reprocher au gouvernement le manque de liberté dans ce pays?

De nombreux dirigeants de l'opposition ont accédé dans les années passées à des postes de responsabilité, certains devenant ministres, sénateurs, et même, Souleiman Nabulsi, Premier ministre. Et ce, parce que l'attitude du Premier ministre actuel Abdallah Karim Kabariti qui exprime ses regrets et présente ses excuses devant tout le Parlement et l'opinion publique jordanienne en tant que député de Kerak Nazeh Amman qu'il avait insulté lors des émeutes du pain au mois d'août dernier.

Et comment expliquer justement que Leith Chbeilat ait été pardonné par le roi et ramené chez sa mère en voiture par sa majesté le roi Hussein après tous les propos qu'il a tenus et toutes les actions qu'il a menées contre les politiques successives de la Jordanie?

En fait, la Jordanie jouit d'une grande marge de liberté lorsque l'on observe l'environnement dans lequel elle se trouve. Elle sait se montrer tolérante à l'égard de l'opposition politique de ce pays.

Le problème se situe peut-être ailleurs. L'opposition doit savoir utiliser correctement cette marge de manœuvre dont elle dispose. En étant plus raisonnable, elle parviendra ainsi à gagner encore plus de liberté d'expression et à devenir plus crédible.

Sa'eda Kilani

Le Jourdain, on y revient
Tous les jeudis dans le Star
645380

Université

La fac manifeste sa grogne

L'université de Jordanie a connu une semaine agitée avec l'organisation d'une manifestation pour protester contre l'augmentation des frais de scolarité. Les étudiants craignent en effet que la sélection ne se fasse de plus en plus par l'argent.

«Oui à l'enseignement gratuit». L'enseignement universitaire est un droit pour tous. «Non à la pollution de l'illuminisme». Ces slogans étaient scandés lundi dernier aux portes de l'Université de Jordanie par plusieurs centaines d'étudiants. A la suite de la décision du ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur d'augmenter en juillet dernier les frais universitaires pour les études de troisième cycle (l'équivalent du master et du doctorat), le conseil des étudiants de l'université de Jordanie a décidé d'organiser une manifestation pour exprimer son mécontentement. Le ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur a augmenté les frais pour les étudiants de master et il a désormais l'intention d'augmenter les frais pour les étudiants de BA (3 ou 4 années universitaires après le baccalauréat) affirme Hussam El Din Saber, président des relations extérieures auprès du conseil des étudiants. «Les étudiants de master doivent avoir le même droit d'étudier».

Cette année, mille étudiants se sont inscrits en master et doctorat. 171 ayant fait une demande de bourses. «N'y a-t-il que 17% d'étudiants pauvres?», s'interroge Azam Younes, vice-président du Conseil des étudiants. Pour lui, beaucoup d'étudiants ne sont pas autorisés à poursuivre leurs études pour des raisons financières. Après avoir envoyé des lettres au président de l'université, au ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, aux députés du Parlement ainsi qu'au Premier ministre, le Conseil des étudiants a décidé de descendre dans la rue pour se faire entendre.

La manifestation a commencé à l'entrée principale de l'université, sous la surveillance de très nombreux policiers qui se tenaient à l'extérieur de l'université. Près d'un millier d'étudiants ont parcouru les allées bordant l'avenue principale qui passe devant l'université, chacun avec une écharpe verte sur laquelle on pouvait lire «l'enseignement pour tous».

A l'arrivée du ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur Abdallah N'sour à l'université, la foule l'a suivi vers le bâtiment présidentiel. Accompagné par quatre étudiants du comité exécutif du Conseil des étudiants, Abdallah N'sour est monté discuter de la situation avec le président de l'université, Fawzi Gharaibeh. A une vingtaine de mètres de ce bâtiment, la foule continuait de se rassembler, permettant aux étudiants élus de chaque faculté d'exprimer leur refus contre la décision. Des tracts étaient distribués aux étudiants afin qu'ils soulignent les demandes du conseil des étudiants. «Etant dans un pays démocratique, nous réclamons nos droits. Mais les examens se déroulent actuellement empêchant les 23.000 étudiants que nous représentons de participer à cette manifestation», explique un membre du conseil des étudiants.

Le Conseil des étudiants qui comprend 80 membres (70 élus islamistes et 10 indépendants) essaie de se faire accepter comme une force protégeant les droits des étudiants. Cette manifestation est la deuxième grande action de protestation

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Exposition

Une peinture spontanée et créative

Après plusieurs années d'études aux Etats-Unis, Vian Shamounki, une jeune artiste peintre, retrouve la Jordanie pour exposer ses toiles à Amman, ville de ses premières expériences artistiques.

Issue d'une famille originaire de la ville sainte Jérusalem, Vian Shamounki, 22 ans, a retrouvé la Jordanie après avoir résidé plusieurs années aux Etats-Unis. Amman, ville de ses premières expériences artistiques où elle continue aujourd'hui d'apprendre sous la vigilance de sa mère, l'artiste peintre jordanienne Dia na Hajjar.

Ses études artistiques ont été pour elle comme une sorte de rêve qu'elle devait à tout prix réaliser afin que la peinture devienne sa vie. L'Histoire de l'Art est pour elle une grande référence, une encyclopédie inépuisable où elle voit avec ses propres yeux des horizons in-

terminables. Elle ressemble à un poisson dépendant de l'air de l'art comme de l'air et qui déprimerait si elle devait arrêter de peindre. «Je dois être honnête dans mon travail si je veux me retrouver dans ma peinture. J'aime ce que je fais mais je ne m'en satisfais pas. C'est pourquoi je dois continuer à beaucoup travailler».

Toute nouvelle dans le milieu artistique jordanien, elle a besoin aujourd'hui de travailler pour se faire connaître. Elle trouve son inspiration dans son environnement, cherchant à reproduire les expressions des gens qui l'entourent, leurs sentiments. Elle ne recherche pas qu'une esthétique à ses ta-



Des étudiants de l'université de Jordanie manifestant lundi à Amman contre la hausse des frais de scolarité.

entreprise par le Conseil. La première avait eu lieu l'année dernière et concernait un système de notation que le Conseil des étudiants rejetait. Il avait obtenu gain de cause après trois jours de grève des cours.

Trois exigences principales émergent aujourd'hui. D'abord, l'annulation de la décision d'augmenter les frais de scolarité. Ensuite l'obtention de garanties selon lesquelles les frais de BA ne seront pas augmentés. Enfin, l'assurance de la part du gouvernement que les universités pourront compter sur un effort budgétaire plus important afin de combler le déficit que connaissent certaines.

«A-t-on réussi à se débarrasser de toute corruption et de tout gaspillage pour demander aux étudiants de combler le déficit?», s'interroge Walid Al Sakaf, président du Conseil des

étudiants de la faculté de Commerce.

Cette manifestation de deux heures s'est finalement dispersée alors que quatre membres du Comité exécutif continuaient de négocier avec le ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et le président de l'Université. Pendant plus d'une heure, ils ont mis sur la table les problèmes que connaissent les étudiants. Abdallah N'sour a pour sa part rassuré les étudiants en s'engageant à ne pas augmenter les frais universitaires pour les étudiants de BA. «Il a confirmé que lui, en tant que ministre de l'Enseignement, n'augmenterait pas les frais de BA. Mais que se passera-t-il après son départ?», se demandait Azam Younes, traduisant ainsi l'inquiétude persistante de bon nombre d'étudiants.

Oroub el Abed

Economie

La paix marque le pas

Les dernières statistiques de l'économie jordanienne traduisent un léger ralentissement de la croissance pour 1996. La Jordanie continue aujourd'hui à attendre les bénéfices de la paix.

Les premières

craintes à propos de l'état de santé de l'économie jordanienne se sont faites sentir bien avant la récente révision à la baisse du chiffre de la croissance du produit national brut. De 6% pour les années 1993, 1994 et 1995, ce chiffre ne dépasserait pas 5% en 1996.

Les inquiétudes des dirigeants et des hommes d'affaires en ce qui concerne la conjoncture actuelle sont réelles. Pour l'économie jordanienne, le traité de paix israélo-jordanien de 1994 n'est qu'un mirage dans le désert du Wadi Araba. Les attentes étaient grandes mais les résultats sont décevants.

A long terme l'arrivée de Benjamin Netanyahu à la tête du gouvernement peut être un choc nécessaire pour l'économie israélienne encore trop dépendante des aides extérieures. Mais pour l'instant, le Likoud ne fait que détruire les rêves et accentuer la déception des Jordaniens qui ne voient pas arriver les bénéfices de la paix signée.

Le budget jordanien récemment voté traduit cette austérité. Le gouvernement a même été jusqu'à supprimer les appels téléphoniques gratuits pour les fonctionnaires de l'Etat.

Loin des illusions brisées des Jordaniens, d'autres économies privées de frais universitaires à bien se porter dans la région. A Beyrouth, c'est toujours Rafic Hariri, excellent homme d'affaires, qui dirige le nouveau gouvernement libanais. Et en dépit de tous les problèmes que connaît le Liban, ce pays reste un endroit où l'on peut faire des affaires, non seulement au niveau national mais aussi international. Une vitalité écono-

mique qui bien sûr due à l'importante communauté libanaise obligée de fuir son pays. Au niveau économique, les exilés jordaniens restent eux bien trop loin d'Amman.

La Syrie peut elle aussi se féliciter de résultats économiques encourageants. Les exportations ont augmenté de 12% en 1995 alors que les importations ont baissé dans le même temps de 14%. Dans le domaine de l'agriculture, la Syrie, auto-suffisante en blé depuis 1992, a exporté 200 000 tonnes de céréales l'année passée, sa production ayant atteint en 1995 le chiffre record de 4 millions de tonnes. Et selon de récentes statistiques syriennes, la production de coton qui atteignait 557 000 tonnes en 1995 devrait être de l'ordre de 670 000 tonnes pour 1996. Idem pour la récolte d'olives qui devrait passer de 435 000 tonnes à 637 000 tonnes.

Ces chiffres ne signifient bien sûr pas que l'économie syrienne ne rencontre pas de difficultés. Mais à l'instar du Liban,

la tendance est claire: croissance et amélioration, et ce malgré tout accord de paix avec Israël.

L'avenir économique de la Jordanie n'est pas aussi réjouissant. Même si Beyrouth et Damas connaissent le même type de problèmes qu'Amman, la Jordanie ne dispose pas des mêmes atouts économiques. Et dans la donne actuelle de la Jordanie, la paix ne constitue pas un atout. Au contraire. Depuis 1994, les Jordaniens n'ont pratiquement rien obtenu des Israéliens qui ne semblent rien avoir à donner, et ont même beaucoup perdu à cause de faux espoirs concernant la paix.

Les leçons à tirer sont claires: pour bâtir une économie solide, il faut trouver en Jordanie les moyens et les solutions nécessaires, en abandonnant les promesses de bénéfices de la paix faites par Washington ou Tel-Aviv.

Riad al Khouri
MEBA S.A.R.L.



La signature du traité de paix israélo-jordanien en 1994 avait suscité de nombreux espoirs, aujourd'hui déçus.

Euro-Méditerranée

La Jordanie plus proche de l'Europe

Un après la conférence euro-méditerranéenne de Barcelone, la Jordanie est sur le point de se renforcer ses liens européens avec la signature d'un contrat de partenariat.

Voilà un an, les 15 pays de l'Union européenne et 12 pays méditerranéens signaient la déclaration qui émanait de la conférence euro-méditerranéenne de Barcelone.

Depuis, de nombreux projets ont été initiés dans les trois domaines principaux que cette déclaration englobe, à savoir le partenariat politique, notamment en matière de sécurité, la coopération économique et le développement des relations culturelles.

Aujourd'hui, les réalisations découlant de cette réunion sont déjà nombreuses pour la Jordanie. Si le premier volet touchant à la sécurité (lutte contre la drogue...) reste le moins médiatisé, il est l'un des piliers de cette coopération euro-méditerranéenne. Mais c'est en fait l'aspect économique de cette déclaration qui paraît le plus important pour le royaume hachémite actuellement. Dans la ligne du programme européen MEDA adopté en juillet dernier conformément aux principes de la déclaration de Barcelone, la Jordanie vient de bénéficier d'une aide de 100 millions d'ECU (125 millions de dollars) qui doivent l'aider à mener à bien un certain nombre d'ajustements structurels, et notamment à réduire le déficit de sa balance des paiements. Une première tranche de 60 millions d'ECU a été versée au mois d'octobre, la deuxième devant arriver prochainement.

«Lorsque l'on compare le montant de cette aide avec le déficit que connaît la balance jordanienne des paiements, on se rend compte que l'effort de l'Union européenne est important», explique Yves Gazzo, à la tête de la délégation de l'Union européenne à Amman. L'aide économique de l'Europe à la Jordanie comprend aussi une enveloppe de 7 millions d'ECU destinée à la modernisation de l'économie et de l'industrie, afin de permettre aux hommes d'affaires jordaniens de mieux connaître le

marché européen pour faciliter l'exportation de leurs produits. Une aide à la formation est elle aussi prévue.

Pour le grand public, les réalisations les plus visibles découlant de cette déclaration concernent le domaine culturel. Amman a accueilli successivement un festival de cinéma et un festival de jazz organisés par l'Union européenne. Mais ce volet culturel ne se limite pas à l'organisation de manifestations.

Un facteur de stabilité dans la région

Il cherche à multiplier les échanges entre les différentes sociétés civiles des pays signataires. Ainsi, le programme MEDA démocratique vise à soutenir un certain nombre d'organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) qui favorisent la vie démocratique de chaque pays. Une dizaine d'ONG ont été retenues pour la Jordanie, une majorité militant pour les droits de la femme. Un million d'ECU sera versé à ces différentes associations dans les mois à venir.

Certaines opérations ponc-

nelles s'ajoutent aussi à ce programme global, telle que le soutien à des publications réalisées par le Centre d'études et de recherches sur le Moyen-Orient contemporain, ou l'aide au développement d'une boulangerie dans le camp de réfugiés palestiniens de Baqa'a.

Aujourd'hui, la Jordanie est sur le point de renforcer encore ses liens avec l'Union européenne avec la signature d'un contrat de partenariat. «Le contrat de partenariat reprend les trois piliers de Barcelone avec bien sûr un accent plus fort sur le volet économique», ajoute Yves Gazzo. «Il devrait être signé dans les semaines à venir».

Ainsi, la Jordanie pourra bénéficier d'un nouvel effort de la part de l'Union européenne qui juge le rôle de ce pays très important pour la région. «C'est un facteur de stabilité politique», explique Yves Gazzo. Et à ce titre, le royaume hachémite est déjà le pays de la zone méditerranéenne qui reçoit le plus d'aides européennes par habitant.

Olivier Bras

Respecter les accords signés

Amman a accueilli pendant deux jours cette semaine une session de dialogue parlementaire euro-arabe consacrée au processus de paix au Proche-Orient et à la lutte contre le terrorisme.

A l'issue de cette session réunissant des représentants d'une trentaine de parlements arabes et européens, un communiqué final a été publié. Il appelle Israël à appliquer les accords signés avec les Palestiniens et à lancer les négociations sur le statut final de la Cisjordanie et de la bande de Gaza. Les parlementaires arabes ont salué la volonté européenne de jouer un rôle important dans la région, en encourageant l'Europe à exercer plus de pressions économiques sur Israël pour obtenir le respect des accords de paix.

Le document final insiste sur la nécessité de relancer le processus de paix au Moyen-Orient, de lever les sanctions internationales frappant certains pays arabes (Irak, Lybie, Soudan) et de permettre une meilleure collaboration entre les pays pour combattre le terrorisme.

Les parlementaires ont ainsi qualifié de premier pas l'application de la résolution 986 qui doit permettre à l'Irak d'exporter une certaine quantité de pétrole en échange de nourriture et de médicaments.

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

La semaine du cinéma français

Deux films sont encore à l'affiche cette semaine dans le cadre de cette manifestation qui se déroule au cinéma Philadelphia. Jeudi 5/12 à 20h30: Les Visiteurs d'Alain Terzian

Vendredi 6/12 à 20h30: La soif de l'or de Gérard Oury

Vidéo

Le mois André Malraux

Cycle consacré à l'écrivain et homme politique français André Malraux. «André Malraux ou la grande vie», le 9 décembre à 20h30 au Centre culturel français (CCF).

Dessins animés

Le 5 décembre à 16h00 au CCF, Les fables de La Fontaine. Un goûter sera offert en fin de séance.

Activities

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Turkish Cultural Centre	639777		
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THE STAR'S

COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

EITC 96 in Brussels heralds in the new era: The global information society is here

By Zeid Nasser
Star Staff Writer

BRUSSELS—Under the slogan of "Doing Business in the Information Society", the European Information Technology Conference (EITC) 96 ran in Brussels from 25 to 27 November, 1996.

The conference represented a unique opportunity for over 1,500 professionals to meet and discuss issues pertaining to information technology and business, with particular emphasis on electronic commerce.

In fact, it could be safely said that the main theme of the conference was the impact of electronic commerce on the lives of people. "We are witnessing a paradigm shift," stated Mr. Christian Thommesen, general manager of IBM Global Network for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, who provided the keynote address at the opening of EITC 96.

It was an impressive presentation of a bright vision for the future, characterized by more benefits to business.

Mr. Thommesen said that, "the networked world is now." He explained how this new world was driven by business, not by the original inventors of the Internet and computer networks.

Everybody can feel the change, as there has been an

'access evolution' which is disseminating information to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Startling numbers show that

estimating views was one sounded by Mr. C. Lloyd, chairman of the UK Direct Marketing Board. Mr. Lloyd revealed that the Internet still couldn't provide the immediacy and ease-of-ordering offered by other direct marketing mediums such as mail order and tele-sales. He demonstrated this by showing a case of attempting to buy a box of chocolate on the World Wide Web, highlighting the many tiresome steps that a consumer had to experience, reading through long terms and conditions; even at the risk of having to repeat the whole Internet-purchase process if anything were to go wrong.

Of course, there were those who openly disagreed with Mr. Lloyd's views, stating facts on why the Internet actually provided a more personal shopping medium, that offered features unparalleled by others. Also, on the subject of rising issues with regard to Internet shopping, a very interesting enactment of a court-case was staged during a session of the conference, which presented a somewhat complex, but probable, case.

If a British consumer purchased a German-made product through an Italian agent and the product turned out to be faulty, who is to blame? This argument highlights the territorial disputes created by Internet cross-border shopping, as it has to be decided which country's law applies to this case, in addition to other procedural complications.

Moving onto another aspect of the EITC, a technology exhibition was held alongside the conference, showcasing the innovations of twenty-five European companies. The exhibition was bustling with activity, and proved to be a success. An awards ceremony was held, as part of

Arab countries maintain presence at European Information Technology Conference (EITC) 96: Making a case for more cooperation

By Zeid Nasser
Star Staff Writer

BRUSSELS—Arab countries maintained a presence at the European Information Technology Conference (EITC) 96, held in Brussels from 25 to 27 November, 1996.

Apart from the many Arab participants, ranging from countries in North Africa to the Middle East, there were a couple of national delegations that stood out, making official presentations to the conference.

Tunisia has long enjoyed cooperative relations with the European Union (EU). Since late 1995, the country signed a free trade agreement with the EU. Tunisia has received support on several IT projects, in cooperation with Esprit. Dr. Karima Bouenma, of the higher council for information technology in Tunisia, made a presentation on the state of IT in her country.

She explained that Tunisia is

facing a variety of problems in terms of infrastructure, information and the promotion of new habits and trends in Tunisian society.

Tunisia enjoys a fairly advanced telecommunications infrastructure, which it is constantly developing, but faces some problems in creating an information structure in the country.

Encouraging the incorporation of more databases information, and the adoption of systems to deliver advanced information processing are among the aims that Dr. Bouenma presented.

On behalf of Egypt, Dr. Adel Danish, general manager of Standard Data in Cairo, presented several interesting points on why Egypt has the potential to be a hot-bed of information technology, highlighting the comparative advantage that Egypt offers in terms of cost, geographical position and skilled labor.

Mr. Danish also discussed

the barriers facing technology exploitation and absorption in Egypt. Such barriers include the lack of awareness, the need for linguistic and terminology localization and the lack of knowledge on how to partner with others to make products see the light.

Mr. Danish concluded his presentation by suggesting that there should be an Innovation Relay Center in Egypt, to keep the country's IT community in touch with world developments.

All in all, the Arab presentations at the EITC 96 provided 'realistic' accounts of the state of information technology in respective countries.

The participation in itself represents an excellent opportunity to initiate more understanding and co-operation with the European Union.

Hopefully, in coming events, there will be more Arab presence, for more technology benefits to be gained by Arab countries. ■



Mr. Thommesen of IBM (left) and Mr. George Metakidis of the European Union (right) visit the EITC 96 Exhibition



Minister of Telecommunications Mr. Jamal Sarraf smiles as he tries on an ear-phone connected to a new model of the Nokia cellular phone; while Mr. Ad Alaliddi, general manager of MABCO, agents for Nokia in Jordan, looks on during a special presentation held at the Philadelphia Hotel in Amman on Monday. Among the latest Nokia products to be unveiled is the Nokia 9000 communicator which offers cellular phone, fax, Internet connection, SMS, address book and diary features. (Photo by Fouad Jhour)

impressive products on show at the EITC 96 Exhibition, the entrepreneurship and technical know-how normally found in technology hot-beds like Silicon Valley in California are becoming visible across Europe. Europe's up-starts have technical skills and marketing knowledge to make it big.

The European Union is to be commended for its efforts to bring together so many technology innovators, users and authorities from all over Europe. With more focused efforts, coupled with continuous cooperation and efficient transfer of technology, Europe's lead will be achieved and maintained. ■

Politics, rivalries dominate Asian Cup

ABU DHABI—It seems that the Asian Cup tournament, which began yesterday Wednesday, will be troubled with political differences among some of the participating countries.

A boycott menace from Kuwait threatens to disrupt the Asian Football Cup which kicks off Wednesday.

Kuwait officials have warned they will pull out of the tournament, the showcase of Asian football, if they find themselves drawn against Iraq when the quarterfinals begin in a fortnight.

"There is no way we could play against Iraq," said one Kuwaiti official privately on Tuesday. "It would be like a signal that our relationships were normal after their invasion in 1990," he added.

Peter Verlappan, General Secretary of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) admits the Kuwaiti threats are real but attempted to play them down.

"Regarding Kuwait's intentions, we will cross that bridge when we come to it. All 12 teams have signed a pledge that they will play in the Finals," he said.

"We are very proud of Asian football bridging the political differences. The fact that these teams are playing on a neutral ground will help the tournament, added the 60-year-old Verlappan.

Should Kuwait carry out their threat they will be heavily punished.

"Withdrawal from the finals is very serious not only from the sporting point of view but also due to monetary damage from sponsorship, TV and media deals. Normally, countries are banned from the next Asian finals," Verlappan said.

But despite the political minefield the Asian Cup poses, with Kuwait, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia all capable of going through to the final stages, Verlappan is convinced the tournament will show that Asian football is on the verge of catching up with the rest of the world.

He insists the championship will prove that Asia will be a force to be reckoned with in

the coming 1998 World Cup in France.

"The players doing well are coming from the professional leagues and the AFC is persuading many countries to go non-amateur, like semi-professional, because only then can you improve," Verlappan said.

Asian football received a major boost earlier this year when Japan upset Brazil in the Atlanta Olympics.

Verlappan insists that things can only get better for Asian football and the Asian Cup will prove it.

On the other hand, the bitter rivalry between Japan and South Korea is another major threat to the tournament.

Both countries had bid for the right to become the first Asian country to host the World Cup in 2002, but before a vote could be taken earlier this year, FIFA President Joao Havelange announced that the two enemies would co-host football's biggest tournament.

It was an amazing about-turn by Havelange, who had previously insisted that co-hosting would take place over his dead body.

Last month Japanese officials admitted that Havelange's dramatic 'volte face' was forced upon him when his firm favourites, Japan, risked losing the vote.

Although both sides agreed at a special meeting in Zurich last month that the 2002 World Cup Final would be played in Tokyo, the key differences over financing have still to be agreed and a victory here would strengthen both sides bargaining positions.

Japan comes into the competition as defending champions and the first Asian nation to make the top 20 in the FIFA rankings.

But they won the title on home territory and despite their FIFA position only South Korea have regularly qualified for the World Cup Finals.

Japan have had wins over Poland, Yugoslavia and Mexico in their buildup but South Korea, who had to qualify, have been equally impressive.

The Koreans scored 17 goals in their three qualifying



matches without conceding a single goal. They trounced Guam 9-0 before seeing off Taiwan 4-0 and then Vietnam, also 4-0.

But previous Asian Cup winners Saudi Arabia, along with China, threaten to gatecrash the South Korea-Japan party.

China have been drawn in Group C with Japan, Uzbekistan and Syria but with the top two from each of the three groups going through Japan should be assured of reaching the quarter-finals.

South Korea in Group A, have the easier of the draw. Their group comprises United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and

Kuwait.

But it is Group B that poses the biggest threat. Saudi Arabia, one of the favourites to reach at least the semi-finals, must take on Iran, Iraq and Thailand.

Although Thailand had problems qualifying, nearly going down to Singapore, they nevertheless won the Tiger Cup earlier this year. They also won the South East Asian Games in 1995.

"We have worked hard over the last three years. People might be surprised how much we have improved," warned Thai coach Tanatshai Sajakol.

"Our team is rejuvenated and our standards have developed. We just need a win and a draw to qualify for the quarter-finals," he added.

But the Group B joker is Iraq, playing in their first Asian Cup Finals for 20 years.

Due to United Nations-imposed sanctions the Gulf haven't seen much of our team. This tournament will give us an opportunity to display our impeccable talent," warned Iraqi coach Yahya Alwan.

To prepare for the tournament Iraq moved to Europe to train and even managed to defeat Italian Serie A side Sampdoria 1-0.

But Alwan will be without four of his senior players because of injury, including striker Ahmed Radi.

However, the 39-year-old Alwan insists he has enough cover in his squad to make up for his absent stars.

"Our young players are equally talented. We are optimistic," said Alwan.

Host nation United Arab Emirates also took the European route to prepare for the Asian Cup finals and last March they won their first international tournament when they beat South Korea. Morocco and drew with Egypt to lift the Emirates international tournament in Dubai.

But organizers are hoping for a South Korea-Japan showdown. A clash between Asia's two strongest football nations would only increase the prestige of the Asian Cup.

Groups
Group A (Abu Dhabi) UAE, Indonesia, Kuwait, South Korea.
Group B (Dubai) Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Thailand.
Group C (Al Ain) Japan, China, Uzbekistan, Syria.

Sacchi takes the reigns at AC Milan

MILAN—Arrigo Sacchi took over the helm at AC Milan on Monday night, saying that hard work and team spirit could take the club back to the top. In a double resignation overnight, Sacchi quit as national coach and Oscar Tabarez resigned at Milan—paving the way for Sacchi to return to the club he took to the top in world football. The 50-year-old, who left Milan to coach Italy in 1991, has agreed a contract through to the end of next season, although the club offered him one to the end of June 1999. He explained his return simply enough: "They asked me to come back, and I owe a great deal to these people. I followed where my heart led me."

"There's always been a desire to get back onto the pitch, and it's a feeling that had been steadily growing. It's a professional choice, but also one dictated by feelings. Now I can be a coach," Sacchi made it clear he was not predicting instant trophies and glory for the Italian champions, but said they had the players and the club to recover. "We need a lot of patience and hard work to

overcome the problems," he told a news conference at Milan's training base at Carpi, north of here. "And we can only overcome them if everyone assumes their share of responsibility."

"I know it's not going to be something simple, and we all have to realize this. There has to be sense of self-criticism among all of us, but I believe this will lead us to realize the value which is in this squad, and why that value has not been able to express itself up until now. If we all have the courage and the willingness to look at ourselves and not our neighbour, it can only help us recover."

"There are very good players and a really extraordinary club here, so there's everything you need to recover. Now we have to all want that with the same intensity, the same generosity and with the same respect. I think we can become contenders again, even though we have to be patient. Today, it's a team who have come through a period of not very positive results, and I understand this because it's something that has happened to me many times as a coach. "Even great players can lose their confidence. Things that used to seem to be certainties become doubts."

"But let's be realistic. This team has quality players." As for the Serie A, which has seen the likes of unfashionable league leaders Vicenza and newly-promoted Bologna take centre stage, Sacchi was clearly pleased to be back. "I like the championship," he said. "There are clubs who are doing well in the table and who didn't start the season in pole position. This only goes to show the vitality of Italian football and Italian coaches."

Sacchi can have nothing but good memories of Milan after a stunning run of success with Silvio Berlusconi's club since joining in 1987. In the four seasons, Milan won the Italian title (1988), the European Cup twice (1989, 1990), the Intercontinental Cup twice (1990, 1991), the European Super Cup twice (1990, 1991) and the Italian Super Cup (1993). But he was also glad of his experience of the national side, that he took to the 1994 World Cup final against Brazil, describing it as "important, enjoyable, sometimes bitter but more often not."



Sacchi

Bayern needs Klinsmann back in top form

STUTTGART, Germany—The sight of Jurgen Klinsmann, being substituted against his old club VfB Stuttgart after a poor performance in Germany's top-of-the-table clash on Sunday summed up the situation perfectly. Bayern Munich will head into the winter break next weekend at the top or near the top of the Bundesliga. But they will need to produce more attractive, attacking football and score more goals to make sure of a record 14th championship. German national team captain Klinsmann made no impact at all in the 1-1 draw in Stuttgart and was taken off in the second half. If Bayern are to hit the net more often in the second half of the season, Klinsmann must find his touch again.

Chairman Franz Beckenbauer has already warned the team that he expects more from them after the two-month break which begins after next clash at home with Borussia Moenchengladbach. After Sunday's clash Stuttgart's Brazilian striker Giovane Elber went so far as to say that it would be bad for German soccer if Bayern were to win the title

because their game does not sparkle enough. The statistics tell the story. After 16 games, leaders Bayer Leverkusen, who are just ahead of Bayern on goal difference, have scored 36 goals.

Third-placed Stuttgart, the most attractive team in the first half of the term, have hit 39 and reigning champions Borussia Dortmund, who are fourth, have 33 to their name. Bayern, by contrast, have scored just 26 in total and only 12 in eight home games compared to the 23 which Stuttgart and Leverkusen have struck in front of their home supporters. Bayern, of course, are challenging for the title because they have let in fewer goals than their rivals. Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni has introduced a flexible defensive system which has proved effective. But the richest club in the land have a duty to do more than defend well with some of the most talented players in the country. Klinsmann is Bayern's joint top scorer with midfielder Mario Basler, who scored a penalty in Sunday's game, with four goals each.

By contrast Elber and Germany's Euro 96 forward Fredi Bobic have scored 10 each for Stuttgart as have Ulf Kirsten and Brazilian Paulo Sergio at Leverkusen. Only Karlsruhe's Sean Dundee has scored more this season with 12. Sunday proved especially disappointing for Klinsmann who ran straight to the dressing rooms after Trapattoni called him off. The forward was returning to the ground where he made his name in Germany with Stuttgart in the 1980s before moving abroad to Italy, France and England. ■



Klinsmann